

A *W. F. h*

THIRD
LETTER
TO THE
AUTHOR
OF THE
CONFESSIONAL: *h.*

CONTAINING
REMARKS
ON THE
THREE LAST CHAPTERS
of that BOOK.

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THIRD LETTER

TO THE

AUTHOR

OF THE

CONSTITUTION



THE
MUSEUM
BRITANNICUM
LONDON
1793

A
THIRD LETTER
TO THE
AUTHOR
OF THE
CONFSSIONAL.

REVEREND SIR,

CHAP. VI. **A**FTER having shewn your contempt of those whom you call the *orthodox clergy*, for believing what they profess, you precede in your sixth chapter to attack your friends, the *sons of truth and liberty*; who professed what they did not believe. These last indeed, who only took the *liberty* of making free with *truth* for their own profit, or *did evil that what they thought good might come*, you cannot help complimenting at every stroke of chastisement. But you condemn both: where then, sir, are we to rank you, that you may escape your own censures? In a class and in a church by yourself? Οἷς, ὡ ἀνισίλαι, κλίματα, καὶ μόνῃ ἀνάβηθι τὸν οὐρανόν.^b Get thee a ladder, as
B Constantine

^a Confess. p. 202.

^b Socrat. Schol. Hist. Eccles. Lib. I. c. 10. p. 180. Edit. R. Steph.

Constantine said to an uncharitable schismatick,
and climb to heaven alone.

One cannot but lament, say you, that to the laurels they gained in disputing with the church her right to demand subscription to her liturgy and articles, (which demand she does not make as you have been often told,) they did not add the glory of becoming confessors to their own principles, and of rather declining the affluence of a plentiful income, or the figure of a superior station, than accept of these emoluments on conditions, which must have been imposed upon them with some violence to their inclinations.* How imposed? Scio: tu coactus tua voluntate es. And you conclude the chapter with observing, that consistency required that they should have withdrawn from a church, which usurped an authority that did not belong to her, and to have born their testimony against her in DEEDS as well as WORDS.^d Gently, sir, for your own sake. If these sons of truth and liberty are inexcusable in your own opinion, as well as in that of all honest men, why have you imitated them in that very fault for which you condemn them? for by speaking of the defenders of our church establishment, you seem to be of our church; by saying let us join in a petition that the affair of subscription should be considered only as an office of insurance for our respective preferments,^e you seem to have subscribed to our liturgy and articles, and to hold preferment by virtue of that subscription: Now, it is confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes.—Thou therefore who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preacheest a man should not steal,
do'st

* Confess. p. 202.

• P. 203.

^d P. 244.

^e P. 201.

doſt thou ſteal? — Thou that abhorreſt idols, doſt thou commit ſacrilege? You think, perhaps, that you and others may lawfully keep what you ought not to have taken. But remember, that though Balaam loved the wages of unrighteouſneſs, 2 Pet. xi. 15. yet Judas would not retain his. Conſider alſo that the ſame ſubſcription, which was a condition of your being admitted to preferment, implied an engagement of teaching the doctrines which you ſubſcribed; that you were admitted for the purpoſe of teaching them, and not of ſupporting yourſelf by the bread of the church in villifying her tenets and inſtitutions; than which nothing can be more unjuſt and contrary to good faith. Beſides, to argue from your own notions, why ſhould not men ſeek *the glory of becoming confeſſors to their own principles* by QUITTING as well as by DECLINING the *affluence of a plentiful income or the figure of a ſuperior ſtation*? why ſhould they not withdraw from an *uſurping church*, and bear *teſtimony againſt her in deeds*, and not words only, as well after they are benefited as before? why ſhould not the great biſhop, who was *vulnerable only in point of conformity*, have made himſelf an invulnerable nonconformiſt? I aſk you no queſtions concerning your own caſe, but leave it to your own mind.

Some of theſe [ſons of truth and liberty] have ſaid, that the reaſonableneſs of conformity to the church of England is perfectly conſiſtent with the rights of private judgement. But they muſt only mean of their own private judgement. For it is well known, that others who diſſent from the church of England, are clearly juſtified in ſuch diſſent, upon thoſe very principles which theſe conforming writers have laid down. You know that Dr. Sykes meant, the reaſonableneſs

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^a Rom. ii. 19, 20, 21.

^b Confess. p. 203.

of conformity to the church of England was consistent with that general right of private judgement, which all men, in proportion as they are indued with judgement, have: as the page which you refer to in his Answer to Dr. Rogers proves. And when you add that *dissenters are clearly justified in such dissent, upon those very principles which these conforming writers have laid down;* for this we have your word, as usual. But why may it not be said, that the contrary is well known; and that, as Dr. Sykes in the same page affirms, your favorite Bp. Hoadly has proved it? nay, you yourself quickly admit, that conformity is consistent with private judgement, if it may be reasonable to submit to what it is unreasonable to impose: which it surely is in multitudes of cases, and particularly in this; as Dr. Whitby, in his Protestant Reconciler, hath sufficiently made to appear.

What might not the firmness of a Hales and a Chillingworth formerly, or more lately, of a Clarke or an Hoadly, have obtained to us by this time? Which, of us all, abused and vilified as these men have been, by bigots of different classes, would have wished to have seen them in another communion? I believe Hales and Chillingworth would have scrupled nonconformity much more than subscription. And a majority beyond all comparison would have wished that Hoadly and Clarke had been dissenters, rather than our church had been altered to their mind.

As to your question, *who will affirm the church established hath lost nothing by depriving these champions of the power of adding to their victories over the spiritual tyranny of Rome, a complete and solid vindication of her own doctrine, discipline, and worship?*

Worship * The world hath seen, as often as occasion hath required it, that our doctrine, discipline, and worship may be vindicated much better as they now stand, than by the help of such changes as these champions would have made. And I have a very confused idea of an *established church*, which hath no explicit articles of faith or rules of practice; and in which not only the Lutheran and Helvetian, but the Anabaptist, the Cracovian, and the Moravian, Quaker, and Papist, may equally challenge a right of church membership.

You talk sometimes as if you only wished a reformation of our articles; but the whole drift of your book is for a total destruction of every thing of that kind. Those therefore who only desire reformations should be upon their guard against you. For you seem to think, because a man hath a right to use his private judgement, he is qualified for preferment in the established church, let his judgement be what it will; or at least without letting any person know what it is. Give us, once for all, ingenuously, plainly, and fully, your judgement and your arguments on this point: instead of writing *about it and about it* in broken and distant hints without end. If there ought to be no established church, no one is wronged by having no preferment in it: if there ought to be one it ought to have some doctrine, worship, and discipline. *Who* must determine what these should be? And by what other rule can such person or persons go, but by their own judgement on proper consideration and advice, what is enjoined, forbidden, or permitted by reason and scripture? And if others think their establishment unlawful, can they expect more than a toleration?

In examining the principles of your friends, the sons of truth and liberty, you begin with Dr. Clarke's Introduction to his Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, whose reasonings you are now convinced are insufficient to justify his own practice and that of yourself, and others who were deceived by his sophistry.

The doctor's state of the case, you say, is briefly this :

At the reformation, the doctrine of Christ and his apostles was again *declared* to be the only rule of truth, in which were contained all things necessary to faith and manners. And *had that declaration constantly been adhered to*, and human authority in matters of faith been disclaimed in DEEDS as well as in WORDS, there had been possibly no more schisms in the church of God, nor divisions of any considerable moment among Protestants." But you think that the church of England hath *acted* contrary to this declaration in requiring clerical subscription to her XXXIX Articles : you conceive Dr. Clarke to think the same, if she require it to *her own sense* of them." But is extracting a *rule of faith* from the scriptures contrary to a declaration of making scriptures only to be the rule of truth ? Not in Dr. Clarke's opinion, I apprehend ; for he had said before, The books of scripture are to us now, not only *the rule*, but *the whole*, and *only rule* of truth in matters of religion. (Introd. pag. v.) Nevertheless, though the whole scripture is the rule of truth, and whatever is there delivered, infallibly true ; yet because there is contained in those writings great variety of things, and many occasional doctrines and decisions of controversies, which though all equally true, yet are not all equally necessary to be known and understood
by

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by all Christians of all capacities ; therefore the church from the beginning, hath, out of scripture, selected those plain fundamental doctrines, which were delivered as of necessity to be known and understood by all Christians whatsoever. And these all persons are taught in their *baptismal creed* ; which was therefore usually called, *the rule of truth*. Not that itself was of any authority, any otherwise than as it expressed the sense of scripture ; but that it was agreed to be such an *extract of the rule of truth*, as contained all the things immediately, fundamentally, and universally necessary to be understood and believed distinctly by every Christian. As in process of time, men grew less pious and more contentious, so in the several churches they enlarged their creeds and confessions of faith. — Human authority and temporal power increased ; — and religion — at last was swallowed up in the great apostacy. Out of which it began to recover at the reformation ; when the doctrine of Christ and his apostles was again declared to be the only rule of faith, in which were clearly contained all things necessary to faith and manners. (Intro. p. ix.) But the scriptures being the same that they were before, they must contain at the reformation, as well as in the primitive time, a great variety of things, which, though all equally true, yet are not all equally necessary to be known and understood by all Christians of all capacities. Why then might not the church at that time, as well as at the beginning, select out of scripture the plain fundamental doctrines, necessary to be known and understood by all Christians whatsoever, as a rule of faith ? Not that itself was of any authority, any otherwise than as it expressed the sense of scripture ; but that it was AGREED to be such an EXTRACT

of the rule of truth as contained all the things immediately, fundamentally, and universally necessary to be understood and believed. Was it possible for the doctor to think that it had been better to have left, at the reformation, the scriptures only, containing that great variety of things, not all equally necessary to be known and understood, as the rule of faith to Christians of all capacities, without selecting any fundamental doctrines, and making for general use an EXTRACT of the rule of truth? And if he meant to say, or you to insinuate, that had the scriptures been so left, there had been possibly no divisions of any considerable moment among Protestants; I may have leave to say, that, possibly this is a mistake. And I will say it upon better grounds than conjecture, plain matter of fact. For when the English Protestants first objected to the impositions of Rome, when only scripture was their rule of faith, without any collection of fundamental and necessary doctrines, the divisions among Protestants became in a short time so numerous and considerable, that they found it necessary to frame this EXTRACT of the rule of truth, contained in the book of articles, comprehending not only all necessary doctrines, but some others which the state of the times made peculiarly requisite, on purpose to avoid those diversities of opinions which had destroyed their godly concord.

By acknowledging the church of England hath authority in controversies of faith, you say men are obliged to take her interpretations of scripture, not only in preference to, but in exclusion of, their own:^a yet surely you cannot deliberately think so, after reading, as you doubtless have read, bishop Burnet's most rational exposition of those words.

If

^a Ibid.

If the church hath decided any controversies in her articles, by a wrong interpretation (or what appears to you to be so, after a modest diffidence of your own judgement, and an impartial examination) you cannot as an honest man subscribe to those articles, though you may at the same time acknowledge in general, that her authority in controversies of faith is very considerable. If, after examination, you subscribe to her articles *ex animo*, as agreeable to scripture, you acknowledge the authority she hath used in deciding controversies was not more than she ought to have, and hath used well for instructing the people committed to her charge; not *excluding* your own judgement, but approving her decisions by it. The church of England did no more in forming her articles, than what Dr. Clarke acknowledges the primitive church did, as necessary; select these truths which were more fundamental, for general use, or more particularly needful under their circumstances at particular times; enlarging their confessions as people grew more contentious. These truths she particularly recommends to be taught, and encourages the teaching of them: those whom she judges in error by contradicting these truths, she will not encourage, nor commit her people to their charge. This authority she certainly hath, and may exercise without abridging any man's liberty; although perhaps an old anabaptist might think he was injured, by requiring him to renounce, if he will be a teacher, what he pleads as his gospel right, a right in common to the possessions of other people.

You think, by Dr. Clarke's casuistry, *a man may be obliged to understand, reconcile and assent to Pope Pius's creed, or a chapter in the Koran, in such*

such a sense as appears to him to be consistent with the doctrine of scripture.* I am no defender of Dr. Clarke's casuistry; and am sorry he published such a snare, as you complain, to the consciences of several others, as well as of yourself.

Dr. Clarke, as you procede, claims the declarations of the church in the 6th, 20th, and 21st, Articles, as giving countenance to his scheme of subscription. Dr. Waterland answers, that these declarations amount to no more, than that nothing is to be received, but what is agreeable to scripture. And for this very reason the church requires subscription in her own sense, because she judges no other sense to be agreeable to scripture. This, you say, is giving the church but an indifferent character; representing her as insinuating one thing and meaning another. But if it is a true character, who can help it?† The thing she means is not inconsistent with the thing she insinuates. But it would be endless to point out your sophisms as often as you use them. The church insinuates that she hath no right to teach any doctrines but what are agreeable with scripture; and such doctrines she means should be taught. I therefore join in Dr. Waterland's conclusion, to which you say he is fairly intitled, 'If any judge that the church's own sense is not agreeable to scripture, let them not subscribe.‡'

You next produce an advocate on Dr. Clarke's side, arguing, that unless men be allowed to subscribe the article in any sense which the words will bear, and in which they may be reconciled to the subscriber's own sense of scripture, and the other authorized ~~forms~~ of the church, no body can subscribe our articles, creeds, and liturgies; there being several things in them, which if taken in the most obvious sense contradict one another. And you allow it. But whereas he concludes

* P. 211.

† Ibid.

‡ P. 212.

§ Confess. p. 213, 214.

concludes from hence, that they must be subscribed with this liberty, you conclude, that they ought not to be subscribed at all. For, say you, *might not the most crude system of paganism be made good Christian divinity, by putting a less obvious sense upon it?* Thus he allows all possible liberty, and you allow none. Let us consider the matter impartially. There are few compositions, if any, of which every word or phrase is to be understood in the most obvious sense, that would present itself, if we had no regard to other parts of the same work, or to other works formed on the same principles, or to the known or probable intention of the writer. Whatever these shew to be the true sense, is (though perhaps not always the most obvious, yet) the sufficiently obvious sense of the words, to a considerate person, in the place where they are found, though in another place it would not. For it will ordinarily be soon, if not immediately, obvious to such a one, that here it is their only sense. And words should be taken in any sense, which they will really, that is, rationally and equitably, bear, rather than make an author inconsistent with himself or with truth. To the sacred writers we owe this respect in the highest degree: to expressions evidently formed on theirs in the next: but to all others, in proportion only to the abilities and integrity of those who use them, and to the other material circumstances of the case. If expressions cannot be justified without interpreting them by forced and unnatural sketches, limitations, or constructions, we must give them up, and refuse our assent to them. It hath indeed been pleaded, that our articles and liturgy are proposed to us to be subscribed, only because they are agreeable to scripture, and therefore only in that sense in which they

they are agreeable to scripture. But still how can a person subscribe them, if he is so unhappy as to think, that some of them are agreeable to scripture in no sense, that is, in no just and fair sense? The truth is, that they are proposed because the proposer thinks them agreeable to scripture in such a certain sense which they express: and therefore wants to know, whether the persons to whom they are proposed, think so likewise. What that sense is, if there be any doubt, must be determined by the usual methods. But torturing expressions to make them bear meanings, which they will not bear consistently with the language and the intention, in order to profess a seeming approbation of them, cannot be allowable.

Following these rules, which are evidently right ones, you will allow, that Dr. Clarke's subscription is indefensible: he and you think that Dr. Waterland's is so too. But why? he confesses that 'sometimes in our publick forms, the Father is stiled only God; oftner all Three: sometimes two of the persons are introduced in a subordination of order to the first; at other times their perfect equality of nature is fully and clearly professed.' And these, you say, are contradictions and obscurities objected by Dr. Clarke. But Dr. Clarke was too wise a man to object mere obscurities on this subject. And the same seeming contradictions are found in scripture: *There is but one God, the Father;*¹ yet *Christ is over all, God blessed for evermore.*² He said, *the Father is greater than I;*³ yet by saying that *God was his Father, he made himself equal to God.*⁴ Now if these scriptures can be reconciled, which you will own they can, so may our forms which are built on them. To reconcile

¹ Cor. viii. 6.

² Rom. ix.

³ John xiv. 28.

⁴ John v. 18.

concile either in any way, some expressions must be taken in their less obvious sense. And therefore barely taking them so, is not, on either side, *ridiculous sophistry*, as you call it. But the question is, Do the Trinitarians interpret any of them in a manner that is unjustifiable? Your opinion that they do, cannot decide the point without proof. And you produce only this proof that *equality of nature excludes all sorts and degrees of subordination; for subordination of order is nonsense.** There are certainly, or I am quite a stranger to the use and meaning of words, many sorts and degrees of subordination among men, in the state, the church, the army, nay, in every family, yet all have an equality of nature, being all equally men: this therefore is not a subordination of nature. And if any, by way of distinction, call it a subordination of order, and should farther, instead of saying that the Father, as such, is first, and the Son, as such, is second in order, say that the latter is subordinate *in order* to the former; the worst you could make of it is a kind of tautology or redundancy, which may sometimes be useful to ascertain that subordination of nature is not meant. Nonsense it is not; for you know the meaning of it: Sonship in the strictest sense implies, not an *inferiority* or diversity, but an *equality* of nature. Such the Jews understood our Saviour to claim, when he called God his *own Father*, (*πατήρα ἰδίον*) nor doth he deny it.

Your next advocate for latitude of subscription is *the acute writer of the case of subscription, commonly supposed to be Dr. Sykes.* But as he argues chiefly from Dr. Waterland's concessions, you pass over this pamphlet as not having in it much which hath not already fallen under notice. However,

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* P. 213, 214.

† P. 215; and note.

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^{*} P. 213, 214.

[†] P. 215, and note.

some things in it, you say, deserve our further consideration.

Great stress, you say, is there laid upon K. Charles I.'s declaration, which gave the latitudinarian subscribers the first hint of general, literal, and grammatical senses. And to shew that this stress is wrongly laid, you add, the XXXIX Articles being established by statute for avoiding diversities of opinions, the declaration which is understood to have introduced these senses was just as subversive of the ecclesiastical, as K. James II.'s declaration for liberty of conscience was of the civil constitution. Now in and before Charles I.'s time there were warm disputes betwixt those whom you call Arminians, and the Calvinists : and the express purpose of the King's declaration was not, as you falsely represent it, to allow those diversities of opinions, but, 'not to suffer such unnecessary disputations.' In order to put a stop to them, he 'ratifies and confirms the articles of the church of England, requiring all his subjects to continue in the uniform profession thereof, and prohibiting the least difference from the said articles.' Was this subverting the ecclesiastical constitution by dispensing with the statute law of the land from which the articles derived their obligation ?

But the title of the articles sets forth, that they were agreed upon 'for the preventing diversities of opinions;' and consequently, for preventing of all general, literal, and grammatical senses, which admitted diversities of opinions. But here, sir, you change the title of the article : undesignedly perhaps, but not without some danger of misleading your readers. Their chief intent was to avoid those novelties, which then distracted the church : not to prevent such diversities, which, being in a great

great measure unforeseen, it would not be their principal business to provide against. Nor is the declaration more accurately represented. You quote in Italicks *general, literal, or grammatical senses*, which *admitted* diversities of opinions; as if the purpose of the declaration, expressed in its own words, was to encourage such diversities: nothing like it appears there. It observes that men of all sorts took the articles of the church of England to be with them in the TRUE USUAL LITERAL meaning of the said articles; that is, the Calvinist plainly saw *predestination* asserted in them, and *the grace of God*: the Arminian as plainly saw *conditional decrees and free-will* in them: but each wrested it to what it did not assert, the one in favor of *absolute decrees*, the other of *absolute free-will*. To compose, not incourage, this diversity, the declaration *wills these disputes be shut up in God's promises, as they be generally set forth to us in the holy scriptures and the GENERAL meaning of the articles of the church of England according to them*. Intending that both sides should acquiesce in that general meaning, without going beyond it, and restraining it to the particular sense, which the one or the other might in his private judgement find out for it. And therefore it adds, *no man—shall put his own sense or comment to be the meaning of the article, but shall take it in the LITERAL and GRAMMATICAL sense*. Which the rigid Calvinists were so sensible was an insufficient ground for their interpretation, that when they wanted to establish *their* sense, they durst not trust to the grammatical sense, but called in aid the 9 Lambeth articles to explaine the XVIIth: And desired an alteration of the XVIth. And this I take to be the design of the King's declaration: not to appoint, as a new rule for the interpretation of

of the articles, that they should be taken in the usual literal grammatical sense, which of course must always have been the rule: but, beside confirming this rule, to direct that preachers should content themselves with this sense, without running into disputes about particulars, which, understanding the articles thus, were not determined by them. This was a prudent, seasonable, needful admonition: and, instead of introducing a diversity of senses, took an effectual way to discourage them, in proportion as it was regarded.

The writer of Remarks on Dr. Powell's sermon, whom you recommend to us in the note at page 217, hath by no means overthrown Dr. Fuller's assertion concerning the latitude designed by the compilers of the articles of 1562. He calls it indeed, as you do after him, *a fancy*; but it is a fact, related by him as an historian, that some have unjustly taxed the compilers for too much favor extended in their large expressions: ^b (Now these could not be persons who wanted to screen themselves under these large expressions, for they blamed them;) and that when Rogers printed his Exposition of the articles in 1584, some *were offended that his interpretation confined the charitable latitude in these articles*.^c Now this exposition being published but thirteen years after the articles were established by parliament, *the charitable latitude, formerly allowed*, must have been surely coeval with the articles. And how doth the remarker disprove Fuller? He saith that Fuller, *instead of confuting the taxation, admits the fact it alledges, without the least shadow of a support*. And indeed he doth not produce his vouchers, as he seldom doth. But he was so likely to know the truth, that

^b Church Hist. Book ix. 72.

^c Ibid p. 172, 173.

that he may be believed, when he saith, that such complaints were made. Indeed either the complainers or he went too far in saying, that the composers in 1562 *extended too much favor in their large expressions throughout the contexture of these articles*, if they meant that more was extended *throughout* these, than throughout K. Edward's; for they are in most places the same. But they might and did extend in *some* places more than his. The remarker attempts to prove, that his extended no favor; because he would not trust the convocation to make them, but employed *some select confidants, cordial to the cause of religion*. But why might not these be moderate, as well as cordial? He ridicules the notion, that they could *prediscover doctrinal differences, which had no existence when the articles were composed*. Yet why might they not, without the gift of prophecy, *providently foresee*, as Fuller expresses it, pag. 173, that doctrinal differences would inevitably arise, in points not determined by ancient councils, even between Protestants agreeing in fundamentals; and have it in their view amongst other things purposely to couch the articles relative to them in general terms: not that falshood should take shelter under the covert thereof, but to include all proper dissenters within the comprehensiveness of the expressions? But their chief design was to avoid the differences which did *then* exist; and few differences exist now which did not exist then. The remarker saith, pag. 52, that K. James was the first who found out their descretion and moderation. But we have in Fuller historical evidence, that it was found out, both by friends and enemies, long before he came into England; and much longer still before K. Charles's declaration was published by Laud's advice.

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You say, that Rogers hath greatly the advantage of all expositors that come after him in point of authority. For his book was dedicated to Bancroft, whose chaplain he was, and bears in the front of it a testimony, that it was perused, and, by the lawful authority of the church of England, allowed to be publick. Now Fuller saith, Rogers's book was published in 1584, which he himself tells us he did voluntarily, of his own accord, and altogether unconstrained. Afterward, in 1607, he republished it, with a preface inscribed to Abp. Bancroft, whose chaplain he might then be: and as the chaplains to the prelates of Canterbury and London were the licensers of books, he might express his own licensing his own book in this form, as you acknowledge in your note. But you add in the same note, as there can be no doubt but he took Bancroft's sense of the matter (of what matter?) for his rule, he certainly had the authority of the church of England for publishing his book, and became the mouth of the church on the strength of that authority. Now that Bancroft ever read the book, or a line of it, we have only your guess. He might only have heard a good character of it, or only think well of the man; or he might have read it long before, and remember little about it. He appears not to have been with the archbishop at the time, as he dates his preface from Horninge near St. Edmund's-bury in Suffolk. And had the archbishop intended to give the sanction of his own name to the book, it would have been some way distinctly said. Yet this, you inform us, is our only authoritative exposition of the articles, for Burnet declares that his was not a work of authority. What, does the permission or approbation of one archbishop certainly

certainly give Rogers's book *the authority of the church of England*, and yet the approbation of two successive archbishops, besides other bishops, give none to Burnet's? Burnet, it is evident, was a man of modesty; I wish I could with truth give you the like character.

Nothing is more evident, you inform your readers, *than that queen Elizabeth's bishops either had no notion that latitude and toleration were gospel privileges, or an utter aversion to such notion, as schismatical and puritanical.** Yet all persons approve latitude and toleration, in some things, to some degree. The church of Rome itself doth; the first reformers did; queen Elizabeth's bishops did: some more, perhaps, and some less. And where is your proof, that they did not allow that latitude in the XVIIth and other articles, for which the Calvinists contend? But you say, they would have looked on notions of latitude and toleration as puritanical. Are you not ashamed? Why do you not confess, like a fair and honest man, that queen Elizabeth's puritans had as little notion of latitude and toleration, as her bishops.

* He that composes a form of words' (*says the ingenious author of the case*) * either so inaccurately, or so designedly, as that the propositions contained in them, in the usual literal construction, may or do signify different things, hath no reason to complain of prevarication, if men of very different notions unite in subscribing such forms. You answer, *the church denies this is her case.** And I presume any one may answer for the church, that she is not designedly inaccurate: but when she is obliged to treat of points, which are in part peculiarly above our reach, she must be inaccurate, from the

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* P. 221.

† Ibid.

the inadequateness of our ideas, and the inability of language to express what cannot be fully comprehended. Or if the scripture expressions are indeterminate in which she cloaths any article, the sense of that article must be left indeterminate also.^s Such latitude of interpretation as these things require, may well be allowed. As to any, arising from new and modern senses of words, against which you procede to argue, I plead not for it; but leave those, who do, to defend it.

Another sincere friend to religious liberty you introduce, is Phileleutherus Cantabrigiensis, who insists, that *'no articles, as a rule and standard of doctrinal preaching, ought to be imposed, because of the great danger that the right of Christians to private judgement incurs by such imposition.'*^h The church is *the pillar and stay of the truth.*ⁱ Which truth she is to teach her disciples, according as their capacities will bear, or their circumstances require; giving *milk to babes, and strong meat to those of full age.*^k Is she then not authorized to make an extract of these truths, inculcating such as are necessary for all, and adding occasionally others which their particular circumstances call for, as a rule and standard of doctrinal preaching? what is there in this that is not agreeable to scripture? what that is contrary to the right of private judgement? must not teachers instruct according to their judgement of scripture; or must they teach according to the judgement of those who need to be instructed? The disciple, after all, may reject the doctrine if he pleases; and the candidate for an appointment to teach may do the same: but will such candidate claim as his privilege by the gospel a right to be appointed a teacher

^s See before, 2d Lett. chap. V. p. 154—159.

^h Confess. p. 223. ⁱ Tim. iii. 15. ^k Hebr. v. 13, 14.

of doctrines which those directed to examine his faith are verily persuaded are contrary to the gospel; and to demand from the civil power reward and encouragement for so doing?

You wonder what idea this *very sensible* writer had of *peace*, when he supposed it might be kept, by the act of subscription, among men of such different judgements as he mentions.¹ I intirely agree with you that the same men, with safety to the peace of the church, might subscribe as many several forms of words, each expressing his own system clearly and explicitly, as subscribe the same form of words in so many different senses.^m But can the peace of the church be any better preserved by men's subscribing the scripture in different senses, than by subscribing the articles in different senses? or must all men subscribe to scripture in one and the same sense? And who shall know whether they do? or is it not evident, that if this method were tried, they would not? and are not some of these differences such, as will exclude men from the benefits of Christianity? and ought not such to be excluded from Christian communion?

But is not Christ, you ask, king in his own kingdom? is he not the only lord and master in matters pertaining to conscience? and can any man give way to an usurpation of that authority, which Christ claims solely to himself, without revolting from his allegiance, and submitting to an usurper of his kingdom?ⁿ Christ is king in his own kingdom: his command to the ministers of his church was, *Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe whatever I have command-*

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¹ P. 224.^m Ibid.ⁿ Confess. p. 225.

ed you. • Therefore, in so baptizing, and in so teaching, his ministers do not usurp an authority which Christ claims solely to himself, but which he hath commissioned them to exercise. He who submits not to this doctrine revolts from his allegiance; and he who claims a right to teach contrary to it is the usurper. Do we then disobey or obey Christ's kingly authority, when we refuse to let those, who, according to the best of our judgement, reject one or more of the essential articles of his doctrine, communicate with us? Yet you, if you are to be understood, would have them more than communicants, you would have them admitted as teachers.

I need not meddle with the next writer, nor with the answer which you have given him from page 225 to page 228; but must take notice of a gross misrepresentation of your own, which you often repete through your book, though perhaps in different words. I have already been several times obliged to mention it, and should be glad to meet with no farther occasion of doing so. It is your assertion, that *the moment a man sits down to subscribe the XXXIX Articles, circumstanced and conditioned as that subscription now is, he sits down to sign away this right [of private judgement] . . . and to transfer it to the church.*^p Now you introduce this by saying, *We frankly allow that every Protestant, as such, hath a right to deny his assent to, or approbation of, any doctrine, which he himself conceives to be contrary to the scriptures.*^q And hath he not an equal right to declare his assent to any doctrine, or his approbation of it, which he himself conceives to be agreeable to scripture? is not giving such assent as much an exercise of his right

• Matth. xxviii. 19, 20.

^q Ibid.

^p Confess. p. 229.

right of private judgement as his denying it? How then doth he sign away his right, and transfer it to the church, when he subscribes, *willingly and ex animo*, that he believes the doctrines, proposed to his consideration by the church of England, are agreeable to scripture? For this you charge her with *acting* contrary to what she *professes*: she *professes* that nothing but ‘ what ‘ is read in scripture, or may be proved thereby, ‘ should be required of any man, that it should be ‘ believed as an article of the faith, or necessary to ‘ salvation.’—But who shall judge of what is *there read or may be thereby proved*?—She for herself: every private person, who thinks he can, for himself. Accordingly, she requires candidates for orders to promise, that they will teach nothing as necessary, but what they shall be persuaded may be so proved. Indeed she doth not teach near so much as may be proved thereby to be necessary: but admits to her communion persons, who doubt or disbelieve doctrines, which she takes to be scripture truths, provided they still hold those, which she takes to constitute most Christians. But she doth not profess, and surely she ought not, to admit, as Christians, those whom she takes to be no Christians. With respect to her teachers, she follows a different, yet a consistent, rule. She looks on some doctrines as being, though not necessary, yet very important, either always or on particular occasions. Therefore she judges it improper to admit any one as a member, who doth not make a profession of them. If he judges it unlawful to make that profession, he may follow his own opinions, as she follows hers: neither hath a right to overrule the other. Either may be in the wrong, or both: one in one part, and the other in a different part. Endeavouring

to shew modestly which errs, and where, is a charitable office. But accusing the church of a *glaring inconsistency* with what she professes, merely for practicing any rules at all of this kind, is a *glaring absurdity*. And yet it is the avowed, and were it possible for you to keep close to your point, would have been the whole business of your book, which hath employed you longer than the Trojan war did the Greks: *impositions, compulsive subscriptions, unrighteous compliances, articles obtruded, starving inquisitions*, are echoed from almost every page of it. Your first eleven years have been spent in repeating this charge: it will cost you more than another eleven to prove it.

The last writer you mention on this subject is Bp. Clayton, who thinks *“any attempt towards avoiding diversity of opinions, not only to be useless, but an impracticable, scheme.”* In which you intirely agree with him: but say, *it was actually the attempt of our first reformers and is still the scheme of the churches of England and Ireland.* Surely this is not intirely agreeing with Dr. Clayton, who *“doubts whether the compilers of the articles ever agreed exactly in their opinion, not only with regard to all the articles, but even with regard to any one of them.”* Had they a scheme to make all men of one opinion by subscribing articles in the sense of which they themselves were not agreed? But perhaps you do not adopt Dr. Clayton’s opinion in this case: and indeed, to say the truth, it is difficult to be sure what your opinion is; sometimes Cranmer was the sole compiler, sometimes there were more. Sometimes the articles have but one sense; at other times you ask, *What shall we say of those compilers who perhaps, . . . were wedded to Calvin’s form of church discipline?*

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can any one say that they held no opinion diverse from this interpretation? or can any one think that they would agree to the passing this article, but that they thought it was conceived in such general terms, that they might subscribe it with a good conscience, and without equivocation. This relates to the XXIII^d Article; Cranmer and Ridley were certainly Episcopalians; and if other compilers were wedded to Calvin's form of church discipline, your argument will lead us to suppose only that the compilers agreed in allowing Presbytery to be of publick authority at Geneva, and Episcopacy in England; consequently they did not attempt to avoid such diversity of opinion, as should condemn either, in their respective places, as unlawful. And at page 214 you tell us, that *subscribers subscribe to several senses, in the intention of the church.* One who says this, however false it may be, cannot consistently charge the church with the impracticable scheme of avoiding all diversity of opinion.

But Dr. Clayton has a further doubt, which you elsewhere quote with approbation, whether *any two thinking men ever agreed exactly in their opinions with regard to any one of the articles.* Try this in several of them, and it will be found one of the most extravagant doubts that ever was formed. Many may disagree concerning the answer to many questions that may be asked about the doctrine, which is the subject of the article, and yet perfectly agree in all that the article affirms concerning it. From neglect of this distinction arises one of the perpetual sophisms of the writers against the articles. It might almost as well have been said, that no two men ever agreed in any one opinion whatever.

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You do not intirely fall in with his opinion; that *'no society or common-wealth can subsist, unless some form of religion or other be established therein:'* because, as St. Paul thought that men might lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, under proper subjection to, and coercion of, the civil magistrate, you do not see that you should be ashamed to think so too.* But by your leave, Sir, St. Paul does not say, whatever he thought, (and how else can you know what he thought?) that men might lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, under the coercion of the civil magistrate, but in consequence of supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, in the Christian assemblies. Did St. Paul think that the Christian religion had no influence in making people to be in proper subjection to the civil magistrate; or that men could live quiet and peaceable lives without such influences? In his Epistle to Titus he represents it as a part of sound doctrine to put men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates: in opposition to their conduct before they were influenced by that doctrine, when they had been equally under the coercion of the magistrate: For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another, ch. iii. 1, 3. Nay, you yourself, so irresistible is the force of truth, express a sounder opinion a few pages after; saying, *human laws reach the exigencies of civil society so imperfectly, that unless the influence of religion is connected with them, the welfare and peace of society cannot be supported. Which I apprehend no body will deny.**

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* Confess. p. 234, 235.

* P. 240.

But you say, *You cannot see why establishing the scriptures should not answer all the ends of civil society, in this respect, as well as any other forms.* If you have found out an expedient, by which you can so establish the scriptures as to convey them wholly into the heads of the common people, and prevent the *unlearned and unstable* from *wresting them to their own destruction*, I will acknowledge no form, interpretation, or extract, comparable to it. But if the scriptures contain more than any ordinary head can remember, or even your own extraordinary one; and what is remembered, is so subject to be *wrested*, of which your own book furnishes many proofs; to establish the scripture only, with all its liableness to being wrested, (and you think it an unhappy mistake in the first reformers, that they thought *the true sense of scripture could be but one*.) I refer you to the author of the Confessional for his opinion of such like establishments: *If the church ACCEPTS and TOLERATES, she likewise MAINTAINS, contrary opinions. For the persons, whose contrary opinions she ACCEPTS and TOLERATES, do, by this very act of subscription, become part of the body of the church itself, and retail their contrary opinions to the publick, by the very authority which the church gives them. Is not this to lift the church off her ancient foundations?*^a The church of England therefore, to avoid such diversity of opinions, and to convey to the people those parts of scripture which are more necessary and useful, and to guard against the perverse wrestings of hereticks, papists, and enthusiasts, adopted the ancient creeds, and framed her articles and liturgy. Put only the prophet Isaiah into the hands of the common people, and ask any of them, *Understandest thou*
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^y P. 236.^z P. 3.^a P. 227, 228,

What thou readeſt ? Might they not juſtly answer with the eunuch, *How can I, except ſome man guide me ?*^b And when, from the ſcriptures ſo explained, he himſelf deduced, or aſſented to Philip's deduction, from them, and believed that *Jeſus Chriſt was the Son of God*, he did not thereby give up his right of private judgement, but *exerciſed* it : Nor did he, by uſing the aid of an interpreter, prefer human explications to the word of God, but better underſtood the word of God by the means of ſuch explication. How much leſs would the common people without it be able to underſtand the *whole Bible* ? You indeed venture to ſay, *that points of Chriſtian doctrine cannot be made plainer in them* (human forms and explications) *than they are already in the ſcripture.*^c Then we have no need of interpreters of ſcripture : all plain accounts, and explanations of *The ſcripture doctrine of the Trinity*, which are human forms, were ridiculous attempts to exp lane what was as plain before the explanation as afterwards ; which, however true, I ſuppoſe the eminent prelate, who died in 1761, and Dr. Clarke, your good friends and clients, did not apprehend. Now, the right which they, in their private capacities, aſſumed, I humbly conceive the ſynod of their country might exerciſe.

You censure a conſequence which you think follows from Bp. Clayton's principles, which is, that *every diſſenter from theſe eſtabliſhed forms breaks in upon the peace and welfare which uniformity is intended to maintain. And this, at once, demolishes all thoſe ſystems of government, which tolerate doctrines and diſciplines, contrary to the eſtabliſhed forms.*^d I have not taken upon me the defence of

^b Acts viii. 30, 31.

^c Confess. p. 236.

^d Confess. p. 238.

of Bp. Clayton's principles or practices, antecedents or consequences. But, in my judgement, doubtless every dissenter doth harm : yet he may also accidentally do good, by making others more studious and circumspect. And societies should bear with the harm, because it must be presumed to procede, without bad intention, from the imperfection of human nature : and intolerance of tolerable opinions and practices would do much more harm.

His Lordship says, '*If men were not to speak their minds in spite of establishments*' (that is to say, openly profess things contrary to establishment) '*truth would soon be banished from the earth.*' On which you ask, *doth not this plainly imply, that establishments banish truth from the earth, in the same proportion as they answer the ends of peace and welfare to the civil community ?*' Civil establishments of religion do harm upon the whole, where the people, without them, would have better notions of religion, than they have with them. They do harm in part, where any thing wrong or false is mixt with them : and yet may often do less harm, than the want of any. When such cases happen, is not always easy to determine, nor perhaps of much use. For if there were no good establishment, where there now is, there would be no fewer bad ones elsewhere. Every man hath a right to judge, what he shall believe and profess, and what he shall advise and encourage others to believe and profess : and his liableness to mistake in this doth not take away his right, as hath been before explained. Thus the supreme magistrate or legislative power hath a right to advise and encourage the people to believe and practice the religion which he thinks true, And so

so far as they practice it from their belief, they are not hypocrites. They are not bound to believe or profess what he doth. Indeed if he leads them wrong, truth will suffer, more or less: yet neither will it be soon banished from the earth, even were he to be wicked enough to use force with them; nor banished in proportion as his establishment produces peace in the society. For it may produce peace, by keeping such men in some order, as would else have no religion, or a worse than his: and this hurts not truth. And joined with a toleration, which ought ever to accompany it, it may produce both more truth and more peace, than if there were no establishment.

It doth not follow, as you represent it, that if the magistrate may establish the religion which he thinks best and truest, *there never was any authentic revelation.* There may have been one, and he may have established *that*; or there may be one, and he not have heard of it, or not have been convinced of it; and yet he may establish what, so far as it goes, is consistent with it: or, if it be inconsistent, it will be only exercising his right wrongly, as hath been already explained. He hath no right to require an uniformity of profession. And conscientious dissenters are not wicked opposers of God's authority; for God doth not require them to conform, while they think it unlawful: nor ought the magistrate to require from them the profession of what they do not believe, nor they to comply with him if he doth.

Now if all these your favorites, and *sincere friends to religious liberty*, as you describe them, are, by the proofs you have produced, *contradictory*

sory and inconsistent, not only with each other, but even with themselves, who can help it? may we not account for it, still in your own words, that while they were endeavouring to repair, they were only dawbing with untempered mortar.^c Yet the inconsistency is not, as you strangely state it, betwixt the scheme of churchmen and their principles. Your words are, if you take their several schemes as they are founded upon the church's declarations . . . then perfectly consistent is the reasonableness of conformity with the rights of private judgement: but go back to their principles of Christian liberty . . . and you will find there is nothing more inconsistent with these principles, than the authority which the church of England claims and exercises.^d Now, if the church of England claims no more than she declares, and her declarations are consistent with her principles of liberty, and her scheme is founded upon her declarations, then perfectly consistent will her scheme be with her principles. If the church of England declares nothing is to be taught contrary to the scriptures, she doth not act inconsistently in claiming an authority to refuse to commission those as teachers, whose doctrines she judges contrary to the scriptures. The only inconsistency in the whole affair is between the voluntary profession of your friends, and their belief. And consistency required of them, not, as you say, to have withdrawn from a church which usurped an authority that did not belong to her;^e but, that they should not have sued to be permitted to subscribe articles, which they did not inwardly believe. If they have been deceived by any fallacies, framed by themselves or other sophists, into a rash subscription, and they find afterwards that, in conscience,

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they cannot *comply with the conditions required by the church of all her ministers*, you imagine Dr. Conybeare would have determined, *an obligation lay upon them to resign their preferments in the church.*^{*} Therefore, if you acquiesce in this determination, as you seem to do, and yet fail of acting in consequence of it, in such manner as you ought, it will not be for want of knowledge ; and you will stand self-condemned.

Convinced of the disingenuity and
 CHAP. VII. unjustifiableness of Arian subscrip-
 tion, notwithstanding the obliging
 sophistry of Dr. Clarke to explaine the very Atha-
 nasian creed into an Arian one, you can neither
 hope for more preferment, nor consistently keep
 what you have, unless this obligation to
 subscription be taken off. To obtain this end
 is the chief aim and purpose of your book ;
 and you attempt it by two different ways. You
 sometimes represent it as unjustifiable to require
 any subscription to Articles, or assent to confes-
 sions of faith. And could you have proved this
 point at all, your proof might have lain in a very
 little compass, and the rest of your book would
 have been superfluous and useless. But then you
 must have lost the opportunity of a great many
 bitter reflections, which, however unjust, you
 could not persuade yourself to forego. And
 though you certainly designed to please those, who
 would have all fences thrown down, yet whether
 you inwardly wish that, or only to have such as
 stand in your way demolished, may be at least
 doubtful. Besides, attacking the constant prac-
 tice of all churches in all ages, seemingly found-
 ed on scripture too, hath the appearance of being

a romantick enterprize. And therefore you endeavour to shew, in the second place, that if there must be something to answer the purpose of articles, they should not, however, be those of the church of England, as they now stand: which opens to you a fresh vein of satyrical remarks. Had you spoken to these two points methodically, it had been easy to see how you advanced in your argument; what was to your purpose, and what not. But you have mixed your reasonings upon each confusedly, and thrown into the midst of both, facts true and false, reproaches just or unjust, digressions pertinent or otherwise, to such a degree, that the reader can scarce ever see whereabouts he is; and the answerer hath every now and then his work to begin anew: at present, you labor to discredit, not subscription in general, but subscription to the articles of our church. And to bring the Orthodox, as you call them in derision, over to your purpose, you take great pains to shew, that the articles have but one sense; which one sense in many of the articles is as contrary to the opinions of most of the subscribing clergy, as it is against the Arians in those relating to the Trinity. You instance especially in the XVIIth article, which you represent as certainly intended by the compilers in the Calvinistical sense; yet this article is now commonly subscribed in the Arminian: consequently, it as much concerns the orthodox, as the Arians, to get rid of our present subscription. This is the *master argument* by which you attempt to effect your purpose.

The XVIIth Article is your grand battering ram, with which you threaten us from one end of your book to the other; but principally through the whole of this long seventh chapter you apply

it against us with unwearied perseverance. A few plain facts will repel, and drive it back upon the engineer.

You begin this chapter with asserting, *It is a fact in which our historical writers of all parties agree, that, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and for some part of the reign of King James I. there was no difference between the episcopal churchmen and the Puritans, in matters of doctrine. The contests, between the bishops and the Puritans of those times concerning subscriptions, arose from those articles which asserted the powers of an episcopal hierarchy, and an authority to prescribe and injoin rites and ceremonies.*^a That the episcopal churchmen and puritans differed on other articles than the episcopal hierarchy is manifest from the bishops proceedings against Dering and other principal men among the puritans, for holding, against the III^d article, the Calvinistical explanation of Christ's descent into hell.^b And also for holding the unlawfulness of the government of women.^c The puritans were likewise censured for holding 'it lawful for
' a private man openly to disprove or condemn, in
' doctrine, that thing that is established by publick
' authority, before he hath by humble supplica-
' tion shewed the error thereof to the said autho-
' rity : expressing his name and hand to the same.'^d From whence I infer, that they did contradict the doctrines as well as the discipline of the church ; and that to do so by a publick writing, not addressed to the Queen, parliament, or convocation, and without a name, was at that time of day judged a breach of the peace. Nay, in the very point of predestination, the puritans and churchmen were not so well agreed as you represent them to have been.

For

^a Confess. p. 245.

^b See Strype's life of Parker, p. 324, 326, 413.

^c Ibid. p. 412.

For although Calvinism in this point prevailed much in her reign, both in the schools and in the pulpit, yet it was not understood to be *certainly* the sense of the articles, even by those who hold *the horrible decrees*.

The prevalence of those vigorous opinions amongst us was owing to the following incidents : The Marian persecution had driven many of our church into exile ; some of these went to Geneva and Zurich. There they imbibed much Calvinism in church government, and discipline, and some rigid opinions in points of doctrine. Not that even all of them were agreed in these opinions : as appears from a petition of many of them to the bishops, requesting that in the future settling the discipline of the church, they shall not subject to punishments, with Pelagians, Papists, Epicures, and Anabaptists, such men as deny that any part of mankind are ordained before all worlds, by force of God's holy predestination, to an unavoidable necessity to be damned eternally : unless they affirm and maintain that man, of his own natural power, is able to will or work of himself any thing, that should in any case help or serve towards his own salvation.^a So afraid were they of the severity of some of their fellow exiles : among which was Laurence Humphreys, before mentioned, who, after having been tinctured with Calvinism at Zurich, was at his return, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, made, by her, president of Magdalene college and queen's professor of divinity in the university of Oxford ; and so continued till the year 1596. This introduced Calvin's institutions, as the groundwork of divinity, to the students there. The same institutions were introduced in-

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^a Strype's Annals, Vol. I. p. 294, 295.

to the other university, if not before, yet, certainly, on T. Cartwright's return from Geneva to Cambridge, in 1578. And from that time, I apprehend, they prevailed more and more, till towards the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign they became the general rudiments of divinity in both universities: for I find Bp. Sanderfon saying, (of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, about the year 1608) ' It was a good preparative to me (that I say not antidote) for the reading of Calvin's Institutions with more caution, than perhaps (otherwise) I should have done. For that book was commended to me, as it was generally to all young scholars in those times, as the best and perfectest system of divinity; and fittest to be laid as a ground-work in the study of that profession.' And with respect to this custom, I think it probable that king James's directions to the university were framed in the year 1616. ' That young students in divinity be directed to study such books as be most agreeable in doctrine and discipline to the church of England; and incited to bestow their time in the fathers and councils, schoolmen, histories, and controversies; and not insist too long upon compendiums and abbreviations, making them the ground of their study in divinity.' Such being the tares sown in both universities, together with the better seed, it is no wonder that the former in great measure interrupted the growth of the latter. But that they did not intirely choak the good seed is evident from Hooker's sermons at the temple, where he preached what you now call Arminianism: that predestination was not the absolute will of God, but conditional: that the doings

• See Hammond's Discourse of God's grace and decrees,

P. 9.

• See Life of Laud, p. 66.

doings of the wicked are not of the will of God *positive*, but only *permissive*: that reprobates are not rejected *but* for the evil works which God did foresee they will commit.* And when his opponent called for his authorities in expounding Paul contrary to the judgement of all churches and all writers; Hooker replied, 'the sentences which he might have cited out of *all* church confessions, together with the best learned monuments of former times, and not the meanest of *our own*, were more in number than perhaps he willingly would have heard of.' Even the maintainers of Calvin's predestination, notwithstanding their prevalence from the causes just assigned, in censuring an anticalvinistical preacher, durst not venture to assert that his opinion was contrary to our articles. For they say, We are fully persuaded, that he hath taught untruth, IF NOT AGAINST THE ARTICLES, yet against the religion of our church, publicly received, and always held in her majesty's reign, and maintained in all sermons, disputations, and lectures.† And, in their second admonition to the parliament, p. 43. they acknowledge, 'indeed the book of articles of Christian religion speaketh very dangerously of falling from grace, which is to be reformed, because *it too much inclineth to their error.*' Meaning the error of those who are now called Arminians. So contrary to facts is your assertion, that, through Queen Elizabeth's reign, the episcopal churchmen agreed with the puritans in *doctrine*, and understood the articles in a Calvinistical sense. In a great part of it most of them might: but by no means all.

As little truth is there in what you next advance, that *the parliament of 1572 seems to have*
D 3 *thought*

* See his Answer to Travers's Supplication.

† Strype's Life of Whitgift, Append. p. 199.

*thought these objections of the puritans (to the episcopal hierarchy and the authority to prescribe and injoin rites and ceremonies) reasonable; and accordingly in the act of that year, injoining subscription, those articles are required to be subscribed, which only concern the confession of the true faith and the sacraments.*¹ Now it seems to me just the contrary. That very parliament, in the 13th Eliz. (for the year by you assigned is wrong, whether by mistake or design I know not) in that very act, and in the very paragraph that you quote, shew that they did not think the objections of the puritans against the ecclesiastical hierarchy were reasonable; because they appointed all persons to subscribe before the bishop or guardian of the spiritualties, and to read the bishop's or guardian's testimonial of it in the church. They also made the bishop judge of every minister's testimonials of life and faith; and give bishops, or the ecclesiastical commissioners, power of depriving men for contradicting the articles.

But by the act you observe, *those articles are required to be subscribed, which only concern the confession of the true faith, and the sacraments.* This you would have your readers understand, as if the act required *only* such of the XXXIX Articles to be subscribed as concerned the confession of the true faith and the sacraments: which is not said in the act, nor could be meant by the words quoted. An act of parliament, especially a penal one, as this is, ought to be very express and clear; otherwise, neither can any man know what it is he is enjoined to do under a penalty, nor can the judge know what offence he is to punish. The act hath plainly expressed both. As it is necessary for the subscriber

¹ Ibid.

Subscriber to know what those articles are *which only concern the confession of the true Christian faith, and the sacrament*, in the meaning of the lawgiver who requires subscription; the act is careful to inform him, by describing them, *as comprised in a book imprinted, intituled Articles*, whereupon it was agreed by the Archbishops and Bishops of both provinces, and the whole clergy in the convocation holden at London in the year of our Lord God 1562, according to the computation of the church of England, for the avoiding of the diversity of opinions, and for the establishing of consent touching true religion, put forth by the Queen's authority. And the judge is as clearly directed whom to punish: every person under the degree of a Bishop which doth or shall pretend to be a priest or minister of God's holy word and sacraments, by reason of any other form of institution, consecration or ordering, than the form set forth by parliament in the time of the late King Edward VIth, or now used in the reign of our most gracious sovereign Lady, who shall not before the feast of the nativity of Christ next following in the presence of the Bishop declare his assent and subscribe to all the articles of religion as before described; or shall not bring from such Bishop, under his seal authentick, a testimonial of such assent and subscription; or shall not openly on some Sunday, in the time of the publick service afore-noon, in every church, where, by reason of any ecclesiastical living, he ought to attend, read both the said testimonial, and the said articles, on pain of deprivation, and voidance of all his ecclesiastical promotions. Here every thing is clear, to the minister, and to the ordinary. But construe the words in a restrictive sense, as meaning to enjoin subscription to some only of

the XXXIX Articles, such as concern the confession of the true faith and the sacraments, in exclusion of those which may be thought to concern discipline, rites, and ceremonies, and the statute becomes uncertain and ineffectual. Which particular articles of the XXXIX are enjoined to be subscribed? or which are they, to which we may refuse subscription? If the statute hath not determined this matter, to whose judgement hath it left the determination? to that of the ordinary, or of the clerk? if it hath authorized neither, as it certainly hath not, of what use or effect can such a law be? yet certainly the legislature intended that it should be of some: and therefore it must be so interpreted, that it may be of some. This case is so clear, that one who labored in this cause before you, the author of *Reflection on a late pamphlet, intituled, Priestcraft in perfection*, who is displeased that the matter in that pamphlet was not carried far enough, acknowledges, 'How many of our XXXIX Articles are struck out by the foregoing comment on the law, cannot be known with that certainty, as if we had the imprinted book of the articles recorded, as our other laws are.' (p. 7.)

In further confirmation that such a distinction was intended in the act, you inform us, that *when Archbishop Parker took upon him to expostulate with some members of the House of commons, for leaving out the rest, he was answered, that they were not satisfied concerning their agreement with the word of God.** And for your authority you refer us to Strype's Life of Parker p. 394. You refer us, with your usual ill luck, to an authority that entirely contradicts you, in the very page you mention. He places this conference in the year 1572, in a parliament which began May 8, (which marks

it

* Confess. p. 295.

it for that in the 14. Eliz. and so could not concern the act which passed the year before) and makes it relate to one of two bills, in one of which several of the XXXIX Articles were rejected. He says, that on the 20th of May, it was read a third time, and referred to a committee, of which Peter Wentworth, Esq. was one, that the referees thought it was adviseable that some of them should repair to the archbishop with their bills: when the conference in question happened. If this account may be depended upon, the conversation did not relate to the statute which had passed the year before, but to a bill which was preferred by the puritans in 1572, and did not pass, but was thrown out with resentment against the promoters by the Queen, with a command from her Majesty, that no bills concerning religion should be received into that House, unless the same should be first considered and liked by the clergy.¹ Upon which your angry advocate, Peter Wentworth, Esq. employed himself three years in studying a speech for the next session of parliament, so intemperate, that he could not find one of his fellow-members to take his part, or *stay his journey* to the Tower, as he expresses himself; but all judged him worthy of imprisonment there, till the Queen in mercy released him.² It is true, with you his merit is so great for this speech to the archbishop, that you have *knighted* him for it, and multiplied this single petulant puritan into all *the lay part of the legislature at that time*, in your preface to the second edition: but I leave you there to Dr. Rutherford's accurate pen, and procede in my attendance upon you through your seventh chapter.

That

¹ D'Ewes's Journal, p. 213, 214.

² D'Ewes, p. 243, 244.

That a conference in 1572 should relate to an act passed in 1571, would appear something difficult to prove, to a writer of only common abilities: but *persons of active lively spirits, who are not easy under want of employment,*" attempt to reconcile contradictions, I suppose, for the exercise of their talents. The Parliament, you say, of 1572 enjoined subscription in the act of that year; and the limitation of that subscription you would prove from a conference with the archbishop in the same year; but, in the next paragraph and note subjoined, you tell us, *Canons, which were not published till after the act was passed, are to be found under the title of Liber quorundam Canonum anno 1571.* And the book informs us that the Synod which made them began the 3d of April, 1571. Now, sir, the difficulty to such ordinary capacities as mine, is, how Canons made to evade an act in 1572, and not published till after the act was passed, could yet be made and published in the year 1571. *Oh, that is,* say you, *according to the ecclesiastical computation.** Your third edition will be very curious, if it can direct us where to find this new *ecclesiastical computation*, which throws the 3d of April, 1571, into the year 1572; or the no less new *civil computation* which brings any part of the 13. Eliz. into the latter of those two years. Till you have done this, I hope your readers, of whose understandings you have shewn so sovereign a contempt, will learn to give you credit in a due proportion to your deservings. If then the conference in question passed in 1572, as you admit, it could not refer to the act 13. Eliz. c. 12. but must belong to another bill about rites and ceremonies, which the Queen did

* Pref. to first Edit. p. 111.

* P. 246. and note.

did not pass; and to this purpose it is related in the very passage to which you send us. So that the authority, whatever it be, of the book to which you refer us, is directly against you; and convicts you of bearing false testimony, in alledging him to prove that the conference was concerning the 13. Eliz. c. 12. in the place mentioned; for he makes it to refer to another bill. Yet, I must acknowledge, that Mr. Strype's authority, honest and diligent as he was, is not sufficient to prove that the conference passed in 1572. For, elsewhere, *Annals*, Vol. II. p. 67, he relates the same conference as passing in the year 1571. We must therefore examine his original, which was Sir Symonds D'Ewes's journals of the House of Lords and House of Commons; which must also be somewhat imperfect, as he complains of the great negligence of Anthony Mason, Esq. then clerk of the House of Lords; and of Fulk Onslow, Esq. then clerk of the House of Commons, for briefly and confusedly setting things down: whose journals, in the years 1571. 1572, he copies, and adds something from an imperfect journal of the House of Commons, taken by some anonymous member of it in the parliament 13. Eliz.^p Now it does not appear from D'Ewes, that Wentworth was of any committee, except that appointed to consult and deliberate upon matters concerning the Queen of Scots in 1572: or that he was appointed to attend any committee to confer with the Lord of Canterbury his Grace, except on Wednesday the 25th of April, 1571: nor does it certainly appear that any conference was held with his Grace, touching matters of religion, in the year 1572. But by the journal of that year it appears, that on Tuesday

^p D'Ewes, p. 137, 158, 155.

day the 20th of May, the bill for rites and ceremonies was read the third time, and referred to be considered by Mr. Treasurer, sir Thomas Scot, Mr. Attorney of the Dutchy, and others.^a Whether Wentworth was one of those others, or not, appears not here. Nor is there any mention made of their attending the bishops, or not. But, on Thursday the 22d of May, the speaker declared to the house her Majesty's pleasure, that from henceforth no bills concerning religion should be preferred or received into this house, unless the same should be first considered and liked by the clergy. And further, that her pleasure is, to see the two last bills read in this house touching rites and ceremonies.^b And on Friday the 23d, Mr. Treasurer signified her Majesty's utter dislike of the first bill, and of him that brought it into the house. In Wentworth's angry speech, which he had been three years in brewing and conning over, he censures many offences given by the Queen in the session, 14. Eliz. Among others, he instances in 'a message Mr. Speaker brought the last sessions into the house, that we should not deal in any matters of religion, but first to receive from the bishops.' — 'And I do surely think, before God I speak it, that the bishops were the cause of that doleful message.' And then assigns what passed in his conference with the archbishop as the cause; and mentions the words to which you allude, though you have not honesty enough to quote them fairly. He says, indeed, this happened the *last parliament*: which, in accuracy of speech, would imply he meant the parliament 13. Eliz. for what passed in the 14th was only a *session*. But Mr. Wentworth did not always observe this

^a P. 212.^b P. 214.^c P. 213.^d P. 238, 239.

this precision, as Dr. Rutherford hath proved. The question then is, whether Wentworth meant a conference, which, perhaps, passed on May 20, 1572, though not mentioned in the journals, as the cause of the speaker's message from the Queen on the 22d of the same month; or a conference that really did pass in April, 1571, as the cause of a message on another occasion thirteen months after? This must be left to the careful reader's judgement. Only observing, that if it meant the former, the conference *could* have no reference to the Act 13. Eliz. cap. 12.

If the reader thinks the conference in 1571 was meant, it will still be a question, whether the bill A for ministers to be of sound religion, which afterwards passed into an act, was the bill to which the conference referred? On Friday the 6th of April, Mr. Strickland made a motion, that 'we, as the professors of the gospel in other nations did, should publish to the world a confession of faith, recommending the *Reformatio legum*, not to permit, for any cause of policy, or other pretence, any errors in matters of doctrine to continue among us: and therefore . . . the book of Common Prayer, in which are some things inserted more superstitious than in such high matters be tolerable, . . . as the sign of the cross, and such other errors; these things might be changed without note of chopping and changing in religion.' And ended, desiring conference with the Lords of the spirituality for consideration and reformation of these matters. On the next day, the bill concerning religion was read: what bill is not said. And many others were referred to select committees, among which D'Ewes supposes the bill A was one: but, he says, 'there can

can be no absolute certainty set down hereof.¹ However, the same day, Mr. Glimston and Mr. Strickland were ordered to move the Lords of the clergy, to know their pleasure concerning the motions to be made to them tomorrow in the afternoon in matters of religion.² On Tuesday following, Mr. Mounson reported, that the bishops pray to have the Lords moved by this house to assign a committee to confer with this house about the book for doctrine: (this was doubtless Strickland's bill.) They met that afternoon in the star chamber. The result of that conference does not appear, except from the journal of the Lords house, that on that day (10th April) the Lords requested conference with certain of the house of commons, touching a bill brought to them concerning matters of religion; whereupon committees were appointed, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Marquis of Northampton, and others.³ So that this bill was certainly Strickland's; for there was but *one*, and Strickland had desired this conference on *his*. On Saturday the 14th, Strickland's bill for reformation of the book of common prayer was read the first time. In the debate upon it, Mr. Treasurer observed, that if the matters mentioned to be reformed were heretical, then verily they were presently to be condemned; but if they were matters of ceremony, then it behoveth us to refer the same to her Majesty, who hath authority, as chief of the church, to deal herein: and for us to meddle with matters of her prerogative, it were not expedient.⁴ After long debate, it was agreed to petition the queen for her licence to proceed

¹ Ibid. 158.

² Ibid. 159.

³ Ibid. 143.

⁴ Ibid. 166.

cede in this bill.* Upon this, in Easter week, which immediately followed, Strickland was required to attend the Privy Council, and to make stay from coming to the house in the mean season. On Friday in Easter week, the house complained of the detention of one of their members. Mr. Treasurer said, that he was in no sort stayed for any word or speech by him in that place offered; but for the exhibiting a bill into the house against the prerogative of the Queen, which was not to be tolerated.* The next day Mr. Strickland repaired again to the house, and he was appointed one of the committee for another bill, for coming to church and receiving the communion, which was read that day for the first time. On Wednesday following, the 25th of April, Wentworth and others were appointed to attend the Lord of Canterbury his Grace, for answer touching matters of religion. If this was in consequence of the committees appointed by the Lords, the 10th of April, as it appears to be, no bill was referred to them but Strickland's bill for a confession of faith, reforming the Common Prayer, and changing some rites and ceremonies, and recommending the *Reformatio legum*: and consequently to this bill, and not the bill A, must the conference, whatever it was, relate. The result was, that on Tuesday the 1st of May, the Lords desired a convenient number of the House of Commons to be sent to them for answer touching articles for religion, and they afterwards returned answer from the Lords, that 'the Queen's Majesty having been
' made privy to the said articles, liketh very
' well of them, and mindeth to publish them,
' and have them executed by the bishops, by direction of her Highness's regal authority of su-
' premacy

* P. 167.

* P. 168.

* Ibid. p. 175.

'premacie of the church of England, and not to
 'have the same dealt in by parliament.' On
 which sir Symonds D'Ewes makes this remark.
 'There were in this parliament much and long a-
 'gitation touching the reforming severall enormities
 'and ceremonies in matters of religion, which
 'now at last the Queen took out of the hands of
 'this house, and promised other amendments.
 So that the conference was not about the bill, A.
 And whatever reformation of rites and ceremo-
 nies, and new modelling the articles, was intended
 by the Commons, it was now taken out of their
 hands by the Queen, and never passed into an act:
 consequently no limitation of subscription is pro-
 ved to be intended in the act, 13. Eliz. c. 12. He adds
 indeed, although the said matters and agitations
 were not thereupon deferred, but continued in
 part, as is more at large observed on Thursday,
 the 17th of May. He means the seven bills, of
 which A was the first; none of which had been
 referred for conference with the house of Lords,
 and were not affected by the Queen's resolution
 above mentioned.

*The bishops therefore had no occasion artfully
 to evade the moderation of the parliament, by
 making certain canons, in consequence of which,
 subscription was exacted to all the articles without
 exception. The parliament had made no excep-
 tion, and the bishops evidently understood the act
 as intending none. Had they intended any, and
 the bishops been sensible of it, durst these venture
 to make and publish Canons, after the act was
 passed, in open defiance of it? those bishops who
 torbore conference with the commons on Strick-
 land's bill, till authorized by the House of Lords?
 And if, as you say yourself, in the note, they in-
 joined*

joined subscription to all the articles, without exception, in words which seem to be much the same with the subscription enjoined by the act; then the act might intend, by much the same words, what the canon certainly did intend, subscription to all the articles without exception.

Besides, whatever bill the conference related to, though it was to a bill in which some of our present articles were omitted, yet you have not faithfully given us the reason of that omission. You say, when archbishop Parker took upon him to expostulate with some of the members of the House of Commons, for leaving out some of the articles, he was answered, that 'they were not satisfied concerning their agreement with the word of God.' Whereas your good friend, Peter Wentworth, Esq. does not say, that they rejected them, because not satisfied concerning their agreement with the word of God; but that they rejected them, or left them out, without examining whether they agreed with it, or not. His words are, 'Because we were so occupied in other matters, that we had no time to examine them, how they agreed with the word of God.' You seem ashamed of his reason, and, like a kind friend, but a false witness, endeavour to mend it.

And further, if the words in the act 13. Eliz. c. 12. which contain the supposed limitation, were not inserted by the commons, but afterwards by the lords, as Mr. Beal, clerk of the council, asserts; then the limitation could not be in the bill A, at the time of the conference, the 25th of April; for the commons did not send up that bill to the Lords till the 23d of May.*

You procede to object, that the puritans opposed canonical subscription *with all their might*;

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None

* D'Ewes, p. 239. † Strype's life of Whitgift, p. 393.

‡ D'Ewes, p. 149.

None of them refusing to subscribe according to *act of parliament*: and that it is certain the bishops had then no legal authority to silence, imprison, or deprive, as they did, great numbers of those who refused to subscribe *THEIR articles*.^h The bishops had legal authority (by 13. Eliz.) to *silence* and *deprive* those preachers who refused to subscribe the book of articles. That they *imprisoned* any merely for not subscribing, I do not recollect any instance to prove; and you have produced none. Collins mentions Dering's case, which you probably had in in your head, who was indeed suspended by the archbishop, but restored in 1573 by the privy council, though he professed that he could not subscribe the article of the consecration of bishops and archbishops, nor the article of the homilies. Dering, being only a lecturer, was not obliged by the statute to subscribe *any* articles: but, by the Canons of 1571, he was equally obliged to subscribe *all* the articles, as to subscribe any. And therefore the privy council, even supposing it to have any cognizance of these matters, acted illegally one way or other. This instance, therefore, will rather prove that the privy council did *illegally*, than that the Archbishop did: as the Bishop of Ely scrupled not to tell the Lord-treasurer by letter.ⁱ Your distinction of parliamentary articles and bishops articles is a very dream. It will be a great curiosity, if you will be so kind as to produce a copy of those parliamentary articles. It is strange that the parliament should pass articles distinct from the bishops articles, and never cause them to be published, but still call them Articles, whereupon it was agreed by the archbishops and bishops in convocation: or that no one should ever see or hear of this parliamentary

^h P. 247.

ⁱ Life of Parker, p. 442, 452.

liamentary edition, with the rejected articles *put out, or not put into* the book. So that, instead of the bishops being Ægyptian task-masters, as you represent them,* beating Pharoah's servants, when the fault was in themselves; the privy council rather resembled the unjust steward, who bid his master's creditor, that owed him *an hundred measures of oil, take his bill and write only fifty.*

If further proof be necessary to make it appear that this act was not *restrictive*, nor excused subscription to the articles, *of the homilies, and of making of bishops and ministers*, I will produce the very witness to whom you appeal, for proof of the contrary. I mean Rogers, in his dedication before his exposition. The sections to which you refer, 34, 35, prove nothing to your purpose, but that the puritans in K. James's time refused to subscribe, because the intention of the church in her articles was changed from what it was before. But look to the very next preceding section, 33, and you will find that, 35 years after passing the act, it was understood to injoin subscription to *all* the articles: and that the *brethren* could never, *in all that time*, prove the exception of any. 'Since
' the statute for uniformity in rites and doc-
' trines was first enacted, more than 35 years
' have passed; in all which space, neither the *bre-*
' *thren* now being, nor the *brethren* before them
' living, have hitherto shewn, of the XXXIX
' Articles, for names and titles, *which*; for num-
' ber, *how many* the articles be, which ecclesiasti-
' cal ministers necessarily must, how many
' which they may not, or need not, unless they
' list, subscribe unto (which I am sure they, or
' some of them, at one time or other, would
' have expressed) had the law favoured their re-
E 2 ' cusancy,

* Confess. p. 248.

• cufancy, and they been able to have juftified their
 • maxim, which is, that they are not compellable
 • by fubfcription to approve them all. Again,
 • fince the firft eftablifhment of that ftatute-law,
 • the moft reverend fathers, and truly reformed
 • minifters of this church . . . according both to
 • their bounden duties, and (as they are perfuaded)
 • to the very purport and true intent of the faid
 • ftatute, have always, both with their mouths ac-
 • knowledged, and with their pens approved, the
 • XXXIX Articles of our religion for truths not
 • to be doubted of Yea, and the *brethren*
 • too themfelves (which now fo fcrupuloufly, when
 • they are orderly called thereunto, do hold back
 • their hands, and will fubfcribe but choicely un-
 • to fome of them) even they with their mouths
 • (which is equivalent, and all one) have, and
 • that according to the ftatute, (or elfe their liv-
 • ings be void,) upon the firft entrance into all
 • and fingular their ecclefiaftical benefices, open-
 • ly both read, and testified their confent to,
 • the faid articles, for number even *nine and thirty*;
 • acknowledging them, I fay, *all of them*, to be
 • agreeable to God's word; whereof the people
 • in their feveral charges be ready witneffes to
 • testify fo much before God and the world.* So
 • that the limitation *pretended*, was never proved,
 • nor allowed to be the meaning of the act in
 • 35 years after its paffing.

And when, in 1586, the puritans endeavoured
 to afcertain this point, by preferring a bill and
 book, exprefsly to throw out the 34th, 35th, and
 36th Articles; Sir Christopher Harton obferved,
 that 'the whole fum of true doctrine was contain-
 • ed in the XXXIX Articles of religion, fet out
 • by law 1562, whereof he found, by this bill
 • and book, three of them wholly condemned or
 • abrogated.*

‘abrogated.’ He therefore knew not that they had been already abrogated by statute, 13. Eliz. or else he thought, that the abrogation of those three articles by the statute, had been since abrogated by the Canons of 1584. But the Queen cannot be supposed to have intended that, by her ratification of these Canons. Especially, as she gives as a reason for her rejecting the parliament’s petition in this case, that ‘to make every day new laws in matters of circumstances and of less moment, especially concerning religion, were a means to breed lightness in her subjects, to nourish an unslayed humour in them in seeking still for exchanges. *Malum est et reipublicæ noxium, assuescere homines ad facilitatem mutandarum legum.*’ You yourself say elsewhere, (Pref. to 2d edit. p. xi.) that *no other act hath repealed this, or in any wise contravened it, touching subscription to the articles of religion.* But, by the 14. Car. II. no person is allowed to preach . . . ‘unless— he shall, in the presence of the same archbishop, bishop, or guardian, read THE NINE AND THIRTY articles of religion.’ Then, either there was no limitation of the XXXIX articles in the 13. Eliz. c. 12. intended, or this act of Charles II. hath contravened it. And the legislature, in this act, certainly understood that there was no limitation intended; because in in-joining subscription to THE THIRTY NINE articles, it describes them as ‘the XXXIX articles mentioned in the statute of the 13th year of the late Queen Elizabeth.’ Therefore 13. Eliz. related to ALL the articles, and not to SOME ONLY. And Dean Bridges, who had been a member of the convocation in 1571, says expressly, in his *Defence of the government of the church of England*,

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that

¹ Life of Whitgift, p. 260, and Append. p. 110.

that 'the book of articles agreed upon by all the
'clergy of the church of England,' without any
limitation or rejection, 'was approved by the
'high court of parliament, by all the states of
'the realm, and by the statute commanded to be
'read.'^m So that if you expect that your inter-
pretation should be forced upon us in preference
to that of Queens, parliaments, and convocations,
you must have found out a new *ecclesiastical au-*
thority, as well as a new *ecclesiastical computation*.

The only difficulty is, what your friend Collins
urges, 'if the word ONLY was not *restrictive* to
'certain articles, but *declaratory of the matter of*
'*all the articles*, all these words, viz. *which con-*
'*cern the confession of the true Christian faith, and*
'*the sacraments*, are perfectly needless, and the
'clause might have run thus, that the clergy
'shall subscribe *all the articles of religion com-*
'*prised in a printed book, intituled, Articles, &c.*'ⁿ
The inserting those words might be owing to
reasons which appeared in the debates, of which
we have no records; but Sir Symonds D'Ewes, in
his journal, hath preserved enough to justify that
insertion. In this parliament, attempts were made,
and bills brought in, for reformation of the book
of common prayer, rites and ceremonies, and ec-
clesiastical laws: the Queen expressed her dislike of
such attempts, as invasions on her prerogative, re-
stored or granted by an act passed in the first year
of her reign, as was seen before in Mr. Treasurer's
arguments against Strickland's bill. They there-
fore might, in justification of the bill for ministers
to be of sound religion, describe the book of ar-
ticles, then by them confirmed, as *concerning*
ONLY the confession of the true Christian faith, and
the sacraments: at the same time checking there-
by

^m Lib. 15. p. 1277.

ⁿ Historical Essay, p. 172.

by the innovators in other matters. Strickland himself mentions ceremonies among errors in matters of doctrine. And in the first framing of them, they are called, *Articles containing the principal grounds of Christian religion (in the which also is to be determined the truth of these things which in this age are called into controversy.)*° All those articles therefore are described as *only concerning the confession of the true Christian faith, and the doctrine of the sacraments*, in opposition to other articles respecting only ceremonies and discipline, whether published or agitated. Surely it is not allowable to construe a doubtful expression in an act of parliament so as to make it contradict itself, and other statutes not repealed: which would be done, if we so construed this clause, as to set aside and reject the 34th, 35th, and 36th articles. The eleventh article being allowed to be enjoined, enjoins also the thirty-fifth, to which it refers for a fuller explication of a most wholesome doctrine, that of justification. The other two cannot be abrogated consistently with the 1. Eliz. c. 2. and 8. Eliz. c. 1. the latter of which enacts as follows; ‘Be it now declared and enacted, by the authority of this present parliament, that the said act and statute made in the first year of the reign of our said sovereign lady the Queen’s Majesty, whereby the said book of common prayer, and the administration of sacraments, with other rites and ceremonies, is authorized and allowed to be used, shall stand, remain good and perfect to all respects and purposes.’ — Therefore to set aside the 34th, which alloweth *authority to the church to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies and rites, ordained only by mens authority*, is not to suffer the above

E 4

clause

• Strype’s Annals, vol. I. p. 282.

clause to remain good and perfect to all respects and purposes. And to void the 36th article, would be to contradict the following clause in the said act : ‘ And that such order and form for the consecrating of archbishops and bishops, and for the making of priests, deacons, and ministers, as was set forth in the time of the said late K. Edward VI. and authorized by parliament in the 5th and 6th years of the said late king, shall stand and be in full force and effect, and shall from henceforth be used and observed in all places within this realm, and other the Queen’s Majesty’s dominions and countries.’ I therefore conclude, that the words, *Which only concern the confession of the true Christian faith, and the doctrine of the sacraments*, are descriptive of all the articles of religion comprised in a book imprinted, entituled *Articles*, whereupon it was agreed in the year 1562 for the establishing of consent touching true religion, put forth by the Queen’s authority; and intended no other limitation and restriction whatsoever.

At length, in 1604, the puritans refused to subscribe, not only to the hierarchial articles, but to the rest likewise, which they had hitherto approved, under this pretense, that the purpose or intention of the church, if not her doctrine, was somewhat varied (from what it was in time of Queen Elizabeth).^p And you quote Rogers for the information. From the first of these paragraphs in his dedication, to which you refer, we learn, what you did not care to tell us, that the puritans, (except some factious spirits that refused) generally and repeatedly subscribed the hierarchial articles as well as the other. But now, pretending that ‘ the purpose, if not the doctrine, of our church was changed, this,

^p Confess. p. 248.

' this, saith he, was the principal obstacle, why
 ' they cannot subscribe unto the book of common
 ' prayer, and book of ordination, as earst they
 ' (some of them) four times have done
 ' and that, might they be assured that the purpose
 ' of our church were the same, which it was,
 ' they would be prest, and as ready, even four,
 ' if not forty times more, to subscribe unto the
 ' forementioned book of prayer and of ordina-
 ' tion'. * This proves that the puritans in general
 did not refuse the hierarchical articles, before the
 canons of 1604 were published; and that there-
 fore they did not understand the clause in the 13.
 of Eliz. in a restrictive sense, as excusing them
 from subscribing the XXXVIth article. Yet cer-
 tainly the puritans were the only persons, that
 held themselves excused from subscribing all the
 XXXIX articles: and therefore all persons, except-
 ing a very few, understood the act from the be-
 ginning in the same sense, in which it is common-
 ly understood now.

However, Rogers, you say, *hath acquitted him-
 self of this difficulty (the charge of the
 church's change of purpose or doctrine)
 by a very dextrous quibble: viz. that the words of
 the articles being still the same, the doctrine, pur-
 pose, and intention of the church must be the same
 likewise. And if the church would not be imposed
 on by this sophism, it was none of his fault.* You
 seem here to warn your readers of a danger that
 the same words may be recommended, in order to
 propagate, under that cover, a *different and false*
 doctrine. May we not then suspect, that when
 you insist upon keeping to the words of scripture
 only, without any human explication, it is
 possible, that you may mean to convey, under
 cover

* Rogers's 39 Articles, §. 34.

* Confess. p. 249.

cover of the same words, doctrines contrary to them; and, if we will not be imposed upon by this sophism, and give up human explications, it is none of your fault?

Let us next examine the facts on which you inform us, the puritans grounded their suspicion of a change of purpose in the church. The first you mention is, *the regal supremacy, as extended to ecclesiastical matters, and especially in the hands of a woman, which, you say, was an eyesore from the beginning to the puritans, as well as to the papists.* See how well your clients and the papists agreed together in sedition and rebellion! — *This, as you go on, obliged Parker . . . to give . . . to the civil magistrate 'only that prerogative which 'we see to have been given always, to all GODLY 'princes, in the holy scriptures, by God himself:'* with this explanation the puritans had reason to be (and probably were) satisfied. *When the kings of Israel and Judah interfered with the sacred office of the priesthood, further than they were warranted by the law of Moses, they ceased to be GODLY princes; and, so long as our princes kept themselves within the like bounds, their supremacy was liable to no abuse. Should it prove OTHERWISE, the puritans had no objection to the doctrine of resistance; or the lawfulness of transferring dominion from UNGODLY princes to the PIOUS AND ELECT . . .* Bancroft took care to solve this matter in the Canon which enjoined subscription, by adding to the authority of the GODLY kings in scripture, that of the Christian emperors in the primitive church, GODLY or UNGODLY.* For a sophism commend me to a new vamping up of old puritanical casuistry.

And can you, sir, expect to impose upon the world this sense of the XXXVIIth article, that
it's

* Art. 37.

† Confess. p. 249, 250.

it's meaning was to countenance the puritans in *transferring dominion* from any prince whom they were pleased to think UNGODLY, and bestow it on one of their ELECT? or that obedience to the royal supremacy, in all causes ecclesiastical, was a new intention of the church, or of that article, unknown before Bancroft vested King James with it, by *adding to the authority of the GODLY kings in scripture, that of the Christian emperors in the primitive church, GODLY or UNGODLY.*" (Which last words I hope the reader will understand to be your's and not part of the canon.) Or will you take upon you to contradict the canon in this point, and say, that the king of Great Britain hath not the same authority, in matters ecclesiastical, that the Christian emperors had? For it doth not say, what you would make it say, all that 'they claimed and exercised.' Or can you hope, by your decent revival of this old leaven, to persuade our princes to cease requiring subscription to the XXXIX Articles, and tamely to yield up their supremacy to puritanical or presbyterian popes? For such was the modest claim of those whose cause you are now so strenuously defending: Rogers hath truly represented their sentiments in the following passage: 'A true ministry we can never have according to the word, till archbishops and bishops be put down, and all ministers be made equal: the other (a true regiment of the church) will never be brought to pass, till *kings and queens do subject themselves to the church, and submit their sceptres, and throw down their crowns* before the church, AND LICK UP THE DUST OF THE FEET OF THE CHURCH, that is, of the PRESBYTERY.'^w May I not now borrow some of your own words? *We will be reasonable:*

^u Ibid.

^w Rogers's Dedication, §. 13.

*reasonable : one single passage of the New Testament, proving that kings and queens are to subject themselves to the presbytery, will satisfy us. Nay one single passage in either Testament (for your marginal note requires that addition) from which it may be clearly inferred.** As to the prophesy in Isaiah, chap. xl. the expression in the original is ambiguous. And Le Clerc translates it, as it may fairly be translated, not, *they shall*, but, indefinitely, *men shall*. For indeed the office of a nursing father or mother is very different from the humble submission expressed in these words, and belongs to different persons. And this translation utterly puts an end to your triumph (Pref. p. lix.) Or we may understand the common translation of the respect which heathen powers paid to the Christian Roman empire under Constantine, it's first head; or of the regard shewn by Christian princes, not to any man or number of men, as ministers of the church, beyond their desert, but to the laws of that spiritual society, of which Christ is the sovereign; in whom all due honor, which any of its members receive, finally terminates, as appears from verse 7 of the chapter quoted. This is the exposition of the learned Vitringa, who acknowledges, though he was himself a Presbyterian (yet no English Puritan) that the true completion of the prophecy was evidenced, among others, in Queen Elizabeth's condescending to take the advice of pious and judicious pastors of the church in establishing and defending the faith.† Thus while the pope literally treads upon the necks of kings, and the presbytery expects them, in effect, *to lick up the dust of their feet*, our church, more agreeably to scripture,

in

* Pref. to Confess. p. lviii.

† Comm. in Isaiah, Vol. II. p. 597.

in the judgement of an impartial Presbyterian, desires to be respected only so far, as it is subordinate to Christ, and enforces his commands. It gives not to our princes the ministring either of God's word, or of the sacraments; . . . but it dutifully acknowledges, that they are intitled to rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers.^a As to the puritanical interpretation of the prophecy, though you would have it be the episcopal, I heartily return you back your own words: *We have reason to be thankful, that it hath not yet taken place, and that we have no intimation, in the Christian scriptures, that it ever will.*^b

The second reason you give, why the puritans concluded that *the purpose and intention, if not the doctrine, of the church had varied from what it had been,*^c was the refusing to alter the XVIth article, by the addition of the words, *yet neither totally nor finally*; and to inserting into the book of articles, the nine propositions drawn up at Lambeth by Whitgift. Strange proof! The puritans not thinking the articles, as then subscribed, Calvinistical enough, desired to add to the XVIth words which intirely destroyed their original meaning: and to insert the nine Lambeth articles, which by the way were not drawn up by Whitgift, but by the puritan Whitacre, in order to explaine the XVIth to a Calvinistical sense; without which explanation it would not bear that sense. The puritans desired to change the original doctrine by *altering* the articles and *inserting new ones*: the church of England desired to re-

tain

^a Art. xxxvii.

^b Pref. to Confess. p. lix. note.

^c Confess. p. 249.

tain her original doctrines by retaining her old articles. Had she wanted to increase the XXXIX articles by adding IX more, you, who abominate all articles, would have *fulminated* (to use your own word) the severest censures against her. But puritans may do any thing.

At this paragraph I shall consider the greater part of your note, which you subjoin to the next paragraph, as it relates to the last-mentioned fact. Dr. Fothergill had urged this non-acquiescence of the Calvinists in the present set of articles, having this motion of Dr. Reynolds in his eye; the hint of which, you think it probable, he took from Heylin and Montague: here you charge the doctor with *not knowing, or perhaps caring to know, how those writers had been refuted by Carleton, Hickman, and others.*^c As you can have no proof of this charge, the laying it against him must be imputed only to your habitual malignity. Dr. Fothergill was as diligent and as honest a man as any of his time. But you either know not, or care not that others should know much of the writers whom you yourself mention: since you give us neither their arguments nor so much as the titles of their books. Yet you can find fault with others, when, only by a blunder of your own, you imagine they send you on a *random search*. Here you send us on a random search indeed, to receive information from authors whose books you mention not; or even without mentioning author or book: *Carleton, Hickman, and others*. Whom you mean by *others*, if you have any meaning, it is impossible to find out. May we not, as well as you, humbly *desire as express directions as we can obtain to the sense and meaning of those authors, with whom*

^c P. 253. note.

whom it is our fortune to be concerned.^d Two indeed you are so good as to name, Carleton and Hickman: I suppose you mean Hickman's Animadversions on Heylin, which you quote, p. 255. and which I have not been able to procure. I suppose also that you mean Carleton's *Examination*, &c. which I have seen; but if it convinces any man that the articles are Calvinistical, I am much mistaken. In it are these concessions, that *men may fall away from grace*, exemplified in the parable of the good seed, where many are represented as receiving the grace of vocation, and yet lose it altogether: 'these, he says, are truly said to fall away from grace.' Nay even of the elect (as far as the gospel enables us to judge of them) many may fall without ever rising again. But 'they only stand, and hold out to the end, that are known to God to be such whom he hath called according to his purpose.'^e *i. e.* those of whom God foreknows that they *will never* fall away totally and finally, they *cannot* fall away totally and finally. Who these are, neither themselves or others know, but God only. So that the doctrine in the XVIth article is true, according to the above two concessions: and Reynolds's addition, if not meant to *alter* the doctrine, though true, makes an useless addition to it. What the article affirms, is practical, and fit to be taught in the church: what he would have inserted, can be of no service to any one, as no one can have the knowledge, which alone can enable him to apply it to himself or any other.

Your next paragraph censures Apb. Bancroft for observing, that *very many, in those days, neglected*

^d Confess. Pref. to 2d. edit. p. xviii.

^e See *Examination*, chap. v. p. 63, 66, 67. ch. xi. p. 139.

*greatest business of life, presumed very much on pers-
 isting in grace; laying all their religion on pre-
 destination; if I shall be saved, I shall be saved.
 Which be termed a desperate doctrine, shewing it to
 be contrary to good divinity, and the true doctrine
 of predestination: wherein we should rather reason
 ascendendo, thus; 'I live in obedience to God, in
 ' love with my neighbour, I follow my vocation, &c;
 ' therefore I trust God hath elected me, and pre-
 ' destined me to salvation.' Not thus, which is the
 usual course of argument, 'God hath predestinated
 ' me to life; therefore though I sin never so grie-
 ' vously, yet I shall not be damned; for whom he lov-
 ' eth, he loveth to the end.' This learned barangue,
 you say, is rank Arminianism, and a flat contra-
 diction to the XVIIth article, which actually argues,
 as the bishop termed it, descendendo; inferring the
 walking religiously in good works, and attaining to
 everlasting felicity, from previous predestination.
 I think our Saviour's rule, that the tree is known
 by its fruit, is an excellent one. An unknown
 principle cannot be the principle of science. The
 counsel of God, which is secret or unknown to
 us, cannot be a reasonable ground to infer, that,
 in contradiction to his reveled will, which we do
 know, a man that sins grievously shall not be
 damned: but, from a series of effects, we may
 presume to infer the cause. Thus, 'I feel in me
 ' the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying
 ' the works of the flesh, and drawing up my
 ' mind to high and heavenly things: from
 ' thence my faith is confirmed by God's promises,
 ' expressly set forth in holy scripture, that I shall
 ' at length by God's mercy, through Christ, at-
 ' tain everlasting felicity. And as all this flows
 ' from the everlasting purpose of God, whereby
 ' (before*

' (before the foundations of the world were laid)
 ' he hath constantly decreed, by his counsel *secret*
 ' *to us*, to deliver from curse and damnation those
 ' whom he hath chosen in Christ, I humbly pre-
 ' sume I am of that number.' In describing pre-
 destination and the effects of it, the article order-
 ly begins with the cause, and proceeds to the ef-
 fects: but then it teaches us from the effects to
 infer the cause. We must feel in our ourselves
 the working of the spirit of Christ, before the
 consideration of our election in him can give us
 comfort. And this reasoning, to which the ar-
 ticle directs us, is, as the archbishop expresses
 it, *ascendendo*; from virtuous habits inferring
 election. And had you read Bp. Carleton you
 might have seen this confirmed by his judgement
 also: who, in the book before-mentioned, p.
 142, 143, speaking of predestination, says, ' Of
 ' which *he will have us* NO OTHERWISE certain,
 ' but *a posteriori*, and by such effects of his spirit,
 ' as we may apprehend in our own souls.' So
 that, if to argue *ascendendo*, be, as you say it is,
 rank Arminianism, Bp. Carleton was an Ar-
 minian, and so was his associate at Dort, Bp.
 Hall, who says, in his sermon on 2 Pet. i. 10,
 ' Mark in what order; first our calling, then our
 ' election: not beginning with our election first.
 ' It were as bold as *absurd* a presumption in vain
 ' man, first to begin at heaven, and from thence
 ' to descend to earth . . . surely we must *af-*
 ' *cend only* from earth to heaven, by our calling,
 ' arguing our election. If we consider of God's
 ' working and proceeding with us, it is one thing;
 ' there he first foreknows us, and predestinates
 ' us, then he calls us, and justifies us, then he
 ' glorifies us. If we consider the order of our
 ' apprehending the state wherein we stand with
 ' God, there we are first called, then justified,

‘ and thereby come to be assured of our pre-
 ‘ destination and glory. Think not therefore to
 ‘ climb up into heaven, and there to read your
 ‘ names in the book of God’s decree, and there-
 ‘ upon to build the certainty of your calling, be-
 ‘ lieving, persevering; this course is *presumptuous-
 ‘ ly preposterous*: but by the truth of your effectual
 ‘ calling, and true believing, grow up at last to
 ‘ a comfortable assurance of election.’ Hall’s
 Remains, p. 269. Thus, sir, had you been ac-
 quainted with those writers, whom you ignorant-
 ly and rashly charge Dr. Fothergill with neither
 knowing, nor caring to know, you had been better
 informed, and seen, that *we can be no otherwise
 certain, but a posteriori*, that is, *ascendendo*; and
 that the course you recommend, to argue *descen-
 dendo*, is *bold and absurd*, and *presumptuously pre-
 posteros*. And Carleton himself approves of Ban-
 croft’s judgement in this very instance, and agrees
 with him that the doctrine, which you fasten on
 the article, is a desperate doctrine and contrary to
 good divinity; for he says, ‘ What the lord bishop
 ‘ of London did then understand to be a desperate
 ‘ doctrine, I do acknowledge so to be.’ Take
 heed lest the intemperance of your indiscrete rage
 prove, contrary to your design, that the articles
 of the church of England are *rank Arminianism*.

In the latter part of your note, you say, *If the
 very last paragraph (of the XVIIth article) be Ar-
 minian, what will Dr. Fothergill get by shewing
 that he and his brethren subscribe ex animo to con-
 tradictions?*^b It is worthy of your candor to make
 the article contradict, instead of suffering it to
 explane, itself. A small share of it surely might
 have assisted your understanding here; and incli-
 ned you to believe, that if the very last paragraph
 was

^a Exam, p. 231.

^b Confess. p. 253, note.

was anticalvinistical (for Arminius was not born when it was framed) the former paragraphs were anticalvinistical also. But then you had lost your chief argument and one half of your book.

King James at this period (1611), you say, was no friend to the Arminians. And a little after, *He hated the puritans.* If King James lived and died an anti-Arminian, and was also all through his reign an anticalvinist, and yet was a strenuous assertor of the book of articles, surely he must understand the doctrine of the church of England to have been that middle opinion which rejects the excesses of each; at least, as he and some others might apprehend them: I mean neither Pelagian in the doctrine of freewill, nor Calvinian in the doctrine of the decrees. This will in some measure account for his behaviour with respect to the synod at Dort: though, I believe, the need he had of the prince of Orange at that time had also it's considerable share. In truth, the king and the Presbyterians, in that synod, acted a little unaccountably. The Calvinist-Presbyterians sided with the prince of Orange against the liberties of their country: and the king favored the Presbyterians whom he hated. A conduct perhaps not easily to be explained, but upon this supposition; that the Calvinist-Presbyterians loved revenge more than liberty, and K. James was fonder of power than he was of the church of England.

*He chose six divines to assist at the synod of Dort, who were well known to be zealous Calvinists Three of these he afterwards preferred to bishopricks, viz. Hall, Carleton, and Davenant.** The memorable John Hales of Eton was also amongst them. That these might enter the synod, Calvinists; is not improbable; they had been, as was

F 2

then

† Confess. p. 257, 264.

* Confess. p. 263.

then the practice of both our universities trained up in the study of Calvin's Institutions: which, as Dr. Sanderfon says, who informs us of this practice, ' might have been much more useful to the churches of God, if the honor of his name had not given so much reputation to his very errors.'¹ Here we see the prejudices of that time in favor of Calvin. So that our divines might have gone Calvinists to Dort, but certainly returned from it not so. Thus it fared with Hales, who went thither so persuaded, but, as he often told Mr. Farindon, ' at the well pressing St. John iii. 16. by Episcopius, *there I bid Calvin good night.*'^m Carleton had an high honor and esteem for the writings of Calvin, as indeed they deserved, and the course of study at that time was not likely to make him undervalue them. Therefore he says, ' If he hath written somethings amiss, as who (writing so much) hath not slipped in many things? yet a charitable construction would help in many things: and, admit he hath somethings which cannot be excused, yet if we consider the ancient fathers, how often they have slipped and erred, we might be more moderate in censuring of others.'ⁿ And that he thought he erred in point of predestination is clear; for he says, ' It must be confessed, that whilst some have strayed too far on the left hand, touching the respective decree, that God, for respects in men, hath predestinated them: others, in zeal to correct this error, have gone somewhat too far on the right hand, teaching, that predestination is a separation between men and men, as they were found even in the mass of mankind uncorrupt, before the creation and the fall of man . . . Predestination

¹ See Hammond's discourse on God's decrees.

^m Golden Remains.

ⁿ Examination, p. 97.

* destination doth not look upon the mass of
 * mankind, uncorrupt and innocent, but upon
 * the mass corrupted. These things are set in such
 * evidences of the scriptures, that for my part I
 * know not what can be said to impeach them.*
 Yet he had studied Calvin and heard the debates
 at Dort. Calvin holds, that the reprobate are
 passed by, or left to perish, for *no other reason*,
 than because it is his pleasure to exclude them
 from the inheritance decreed to his children.* . . .
 And that it is not fit to refer the course that leads
 to destruction to any thing else, than the secret
 counsel of God.* And that their destruction was
 not only foreknown, but that they were created
 on purpose that they might be damned.* But the
 English divines at Dort maintained, that God
 damns no one, or decrees him to destruction, but
 from the consideration of his sins.* So that the
 F 3 English

• Ibid.

* Quos ergo præterit, reprobat; neque aliâ de causâ,
 nisi quod ab hæreditate, quam filiis suis prædestinat, illos
 vult excludere . . .

* . . . Minimè consentaneum est præparationem ad interitum aliò transferre quam ad arcanum consilium Dei. *Institut.*
 lib. iii. cap. 23. §. 1. p. 335.

* Non modò præcognitum fuisse impiorum interitum,
 sed impios fuisse destinatos creatos, ut perirent. In Rom.
 ix. 18.

* Deus neminem damnat, aut damnationi destinat, nisi
 ex consideratione peccati. Theol. Britan. Dordr. Art. I.
 de reprob. Thes. 5. — It may not be amiss to observe
 here, that they differed from Calvin also in another point,
 unconnected with this. They were averse from presbytery,
 laboring with the synod to introduce episcopacy; and pre-
 vailed so far, that their best learned answered, ' They did
 * much honor and reverence the good order and discipline of
 * the church of England; and with all their hearts would
 * be glad to have it established amongst them, but that could
 * not be hoped for in their state; their hope was, that see-
 * ing they could not doe what they desired, that God would
 * be merciful to them, if they did what they could.' So
 witnesses Dr. Carleton, at page 219 of his Examination.

English divines, sent by king James to that synod; were not the most rigid Calvinists, or Supralapsarians; Sublapsarians indeed they probably were in the point of predestination, when they went, but not rigid Calvinists. Rigid Calvinism did much prevail in the latter end of Q. Elizabeth's reign; and I have assigned the reason of it. But if the prevalence of an opinion, at a particular time, is to determine the sense of our articles, they must have been Supralapsarian in the end of Q. Elizabeth's reign; Sublapsarian in K. James's; and Arminian in Charles the first's and ever since. Whereas the truth is, that the Supralapsarian is condemned by the XVIIth article, while the Sublapsarian and the Arminian are consistent with it, and indeed sufficiently with one another; if they would both attend to their mutual concessions, and not charge each other with consequences, which, however justly they may seem to follow, yet are disavowed by the maintainers of the premises. As may be seen in Bp. Hall's *Shaking of the olive-tree*, page 355-388. The remonstrant grants that there is a predestination to life: that the purpose, means, and happy effect of it, are merely the gift of God in Christ.* And so says our article. The contra-remonstrant allows, that God, by his conditionate decree, wills only the faithful to be saved; and only the unbelievers and wicked to be damned.* And so holds our article. The contra-remonstrant admits that

we

* Ad nauseam usque inculcamus nihil ex se aut suis viribus hominem posse: τὰ πῶτα, τὰ μετὰ, τὰ ὕστατα, fidei et conversionis gratia deberi. Rom. Epist. ad Ext. p. 62.

* Cæterum illud tamen verum est, Deum velle omnes homines salvos fieri voluntate scilicet revelatâ et conditionalit, nimirum si velint in Christum credere, et ejus legi servandæ fiderè; hæc enim voluntate nemo à salute et cognitione veritatis excluditur. *Zanchini* de prædest. sanct. p. 285.

we cannot be assured of our predestination but by the fruits of it in our lives, as was seen just before; agreeably to our XVIIth article. And that the supposed elect may fall away totally and finally: and that even those who shall be saved may fall away for a time, during which time they cannot be assured of their salvation, though they afterwards will recover again," agreeably to our XVIth article. And the remonstrants on the other hand deliver it as their opinion, that a man may and ought to be assured of his salvation: that only the grace of God is the supernatural cause of our perseverance, to which we owe both the power and the will to persevere.* Both refer the whole of our salvation to the grace and glory of God, through Christ: both contend, that faith and repentance are necessary to salvation, so that no capable subject can be saved without them: both caution against that divinity of arguing *descendendo*, from predestination inferring faith and obedience; but direct us to reason *ascendendo*, from our faith and obedience inferring our predestination: both agree that we should thence entertain a comfortable assurance of salvation, while we continue to produce such fruits: both allow that we may fall from grace received, some totally and finally; and even the elect, so far as to lose that comfortable assurance, though eventually

F 4

they

* Regeniti et justificati quandoque suo vitio incident in atrociora peccata . . . Ita ut dum in eo statu impenitentes persistunt, nec debeant, nec possint aliter sibi persuadere, quam se esse morti obnoxios. Theol. Britan. Pordr. de 5 Art. Thes. 3 de persever.

† Hanc nostram esse sententiam profiteamur, hominem de salute æterna certum esse posse et debere: solum Dei gratiam esse perseverantiæ causam supernaturalem, quæ facit, ut voluntas nostra perseverare et possit et velit. Remonstr. Epist. ad Ext. p. 75.

they recover it again. These moderate bounds, Bp. Hall says, are such as the church of England, guided by the scriptures, hath expressly set, or which on both sides are fully accorded on. Let us then, as he exhorts, quietly enjoy what is true in both (he means the Sublapsarian and Arminian interpretations) and not indiscretely spend our time and pains in distracting people's thoughts with those scholastical disquisitions, whereof the knowledge or ignorance makes nothing to heaven.*

I have passed over, and shall pass over, what fills up many pages of your book, as foreign from your argument, or easily seen through by your readers. You represent Bancroft, very unfairly, as shewing the king only the very last paragraph of the XVIIth article; as authorizing Rogers's Exposition, and as doing contrary to his own sentiments, because he found the king not sufficiently pliable to come into them. You enter into long details about king James, and Abbot, and Grotius, which have no concern with the point in hand. The project of the last, for an union between the Protestants and the church of Rome, was peculiar to himself. It had not the least connection with his Arminian notions. None of the Arminians of his own or the following times adopted or favored it. The famous Arminian professor, Limborch, hath a chapter, in his System of theology, to prove that the pope is antichrist. You labor to have it believed, that the Arminian bishops, in the reigns of James and Charles the first, were inclined to popery. If they were, it could not be their Arminianism that inclined them to it. But, indeed, though I am far from defending all their opinions and practices, either in

* Shaking of the Olive-tree, p. 386.

in ecclesiastical or civil matters, I must say, and it is notorious, that the generality, if not all of them, were zealous enemies to popery. King James acted, in that respect, as he did in all others, agreeably to the maxims of the king-craft, on which he valued himself so much. But his successor neither made any overtures to the church of Rome, nor received any from it by himself or any of his prelates.

You inform us, that King James *imagined whoever was not a friend to episcopal power, must have the same objections to that of kings; and perhaps he was not much mistaken, with respect to his own contemporaries.*¹ From many expressions in the Confessional, a man that should imagine the same *now*, perhaps would not be much mistaken with respect to some of his own contemporaries. However, though these were your dear friends all the way, you admit *the open avowing the lawfulness of resisting* (whom they will please to call *ungodly* princes) *was not very DISCRETE.*² And you intimate, that King James might have seen, though perhaps he did not, how, *what were called* (as you gently word it) *the factious attempts of the puritans were countenanced by the divinity of Calvin.* I wonder therefore, that you are not more *discrete*: and hope your readers will not fail to see, what is pretty visible. Yet I know not how to suspect the bulk of those, who adhere to Calvin's doctrine, or even to his discipline, of drawing such conclusions from either, as you apprehend, but surely without cause, to be connected with them.

*It would not, as you procede to tell us, be so easily comprehended by the people, how they, (meaning the puritans) who were so perfectly right in their divinity, could be so far wrong in their politicks.*³ There was no difficulty of comprehending in this case:

¹ Confess. p. 264.

² P. 265.

³ P. 267.

case : such of the people, who thought the puritans divinity *perfectly right*, agreed with them also in their politicks, for this plain reason, because they were Calvinists. But those of the church of England, who held the doctrines of her XXXIX Articles, condemned both their divinity and their politicks.

You would have us believe, that the members of the church of England were taught the Arminian, instead of the Puritan or Calvinist doctrine, which they had hitherto embraced, with a deliberate design to keep them from embracing the Puritan or Calvinist politicks also. But the old doctrine of the church of England had been very consistent with loyalty ever since the reformation : and what need could there be of changing it, to secure loyalty now ? Any degree of obedience to the civil power may as well be maintained on Calvinist principles, as Arminian. And therefore, those bishops, who wanted to innovate in politicks, could never hope to serve that purpose by innovating in these points too. It must raise very strong prejudices against them, and greatly obstruct their success, as the very suspicion of it did. So that their being at the same time Arminians, and assertors of the absolute power of kings, was merely accidental. And whatever mischief the latter of these doctrines produced in the sequel, you confess, p. 273, that it was taken up by our churchmen, *when they were writing against the popish king-killers*. So that originally it was designed to serve a very laudable purpose ; the consciousness of which might induce even wise and good men to carry it, incautiously, somewhat too far : whereas the notion, which runs into the contrary extreme, sprung from the very dregs of Romish error ; yet

yet was adopted by your friends, the puritans, who carried it to a greater length than the Jesuits themselves did. For these justified the deposition only of *heretical* kings: but the former, of *all ungodly* ones; a far more extensive appellation. Their successors, I am persuaded, have in general seen the mistake of their predecessors.

You observe, p. 273, that Laud and his two friends, in their recommendation of Montague, represent the council of Trent as faulty, in requiring subscriptions to school opinions; and the church of England as commendable for her moderation in avoiding this: *the reverse of which*, you say, *is the honest truth*:^b for that the articles have decided concerning the school-opinions about predestination, and the council hath not. Now, that the articles have not decided concerning them, I hope I have shewn already: and that the council hath, Laud doth not say; but only in general, that it hath blameably decided scholastick niceties, which is a notorious fact. He must therefore in all reason be understood to mean, that the church of England hath shewed that moderation in this respect, which the council of Trent hath failed to shew in many. It also gives you offence, that *he should talk of her moderation*. Yet persons may be moderate in some cases, who are not so in all. But you are undoubtedly more consistent, who make no pretensions to it in any.

You say, some pages before this, that *King James was not so weak, but that he saw plainly, popery was at no great distance from Arminianism*.^c Now I confess myself so weak, as not to see this: and believe that in the present age very few pretend to see it. I know it was then the popular cry: as many absurdities often have been. But by degrees the world

^b Confess. p. 274.

^c Confess. p. 265.

world grew ashamed of it. Yet you gravely tell us, *The apparent dangers and errors of the church of Rome, were doctrines and practices so founded upon the Arminian side of these school niceties, that the church of England did not think the apparent errors or dangers could be refused (or refuted) without determining these school niceties the other way, which was accordingly done in the XXXIX Articles.*^a Whereas Bishop Carleton assures us, that the church of Rome holds absolute predestination, in opposition to the Arminians: *Restat igitur ut hujus discretionis causa sit voluntas Dei, quæ unum liberat, quia ei placet, alterum non liberat, quia non placet,* Bellarm. lib. 2. de gratia et libero arbitrio, cap. 16. So that popery is at least as near to Calvinism as it is to Arminianism: and if the latter may be a back door to it for any to enter at, under the guidance of Franciscans and Jesuits, the former may prove as open an entrance under the convoy of Dominicans and Jansenists. Therefore, if you have no regard for the anticalvinist divines of our church before the reformation, or even for a Stillingfleet, a Sharpe, or a Tillotson, after it, yet at least have mercy upon your friends, Clarke, Hoadly, and Clayton, all whom you must rank in the class of Arminians: yet surely you cannot believe they were inclined to popery.

You ask, *Were the Lambeth articles only debated at Lambeth? or only ready to be published? the Queen's suppression could amount to a very small matter, since it is plain they still continued to have their currency in Cambridge as much as before.*^{*} They cannot fairly be said to be so much as even ready to be published, being not intended for publick use, only as a temporary and local expedient to procure peace at that time at Cambridge. That the arch-
bishop

^a P. 274, 275.^{*} P. 276.

bishop did not think the doctrines, censured by those Lambeth propositions, contrary to our articles, is evident from his justifying Barret; whose sermon had occasioned this complaint from the puritanical heads of houses. He tells them, Barret was right in some of the points, which they had forced him to retract; *for the scriptures were plain, that God, by his absolute will, did not hate and reject any man. . . . Neither was it contrary to any article of religion established by authority in this church of England, but rather agreeable thereto.* And when he sent them the Lambeth articles, he expressly tells them, that 'the propositions must so be taken and used, as their PRIVATE JUDGEMENTS: thinking them to be true, and correspondent to the doctrine professed in the church of England, and established by the laws of the land: and NOT as LAWS and DECREES.' Nay the puritans themselves assent to this, by dropping the articles, and appealing to the current divinity at Cambridge: Mr. Barret both taught untruth, IF NOT AGAINST THE ARTICLES, yet against the religion of our church, publicly received, and alway held in her Majesty's reign, and maintained in all sermons, disputations, and lectures.' So that whatever influenced the archbishop to agree to the Lambeth articles, it was plain he was satisfied that some of the doctrines, against which they were levelled, were the doctrines of our XXXIX articles. And that the subject matter of the Lambeth propositions displeased the court, appears from Burleigh's reprimand of the heads of houses: *as good and as ancient*

^f Strype's life of Whitgift, p. 441.

^g Life of Whitgift, p. 462.

^h Strype's life of Whitgift, Append. p. 199.

ancient were of another judgement (from them.) They might punish him (Baro) but it would be for well doing. Such was Burleigh's judgement at that time, and the archbishop himself, for his share in that matter, narrowly escaped being attainted in a premunire.¹ On this discouragement the prosecution against Baro was dropped.

You assert, but bring no proof of it, that K. James sent the Lambeth articles to Dort, and to Ireland.² Pym indeed saith it, in Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 647: but on what ground doth he say it, or on what shadow of ground doth he say, that *they were allowed of our state?* when Bp. Davenant saith (Fuller, book 2. p. 190.) that 'the instructions which K. James gave them, at their going to Dort, make little or nothing to the matter of predestination.' You profess to wonder, what, in the opinion of *Laud and his friends, amounted to receiving the Synod of Dort by publick authority*, if it was not so received here. But may I not, with far more reason, wonder, that so declared an enemy to ecclesiastical impositions as you are, should be for imposing all the doctrinal decisions of that Synod on this nation, merely because the King sent six divines to assist at it, who approved them, and were favorably received by him on their return! If the imposition be such, as serves your present purpose, a very small matter, it seems, will suffice in your opinion to make a law of it. I hope we shall never see so bold a hand intrusted with such work. As to your parallel of the nonreception of the Synod of Dort by us, and of the council of Trent by the French, it will hold good, when we plead the authority of that

¹ Life of Whitgift, p. 473.

² Confess. p. 277.

that Synod on one point, and reject it in another but not before.

You call the archbishop *the crafty Laud*, for *walking by*, while Bp. Davenant was reprimanded, *without speaking one word.*¹ Craft was not one of Laud's faults: and he had no temptation to shew any in the present case. But even his silence must have the worst interpretation put upon it. The *subscribing with a latitude, or taking particular articles in different senses*, you charge as *an artifice of archbishop Laud's, to open a way for his own Arminian opinions.*^m The facts from which you infer this were, that he had declared to the D. of Buckingham, that some of the points *were curious points, disputed in the schools, and to be left to the liberty of learned men to abound in their own sense*: but that afterwards he obtained *a prohibition to preach upon these controverted points.* The occasion of his declaration to the D. of Buckingham was to shield Montague from the censure of the House of Commons, who had taken upon them, without consulting with the clergy, and without the concurrence of either of the other two parts of the legislature, to decide points of religion; and on this occasion he might justly urge that it was contrary to Christ's ordinance, that the laity, exclusive of the governors of the church, should determine such points of religion, and contrary to the king's supremacy, and to the share of power, which the Lords spiritual and temporal have by law in our constitution. Nay, you go still further than this yourself, by quoting with approbation what Dr. Sykes saith, that, *supposing the legislature itself, considered as such, were (without a new declaratory law) to intermeddle in determining what is the proper sense and extent*

¹ Confess. p. 278.

^m Confess. p. 280.

extent of the articles, and what shall be judged agreeable or disagreeable to them—this would be determining what they had no right to determine. Some of the opinions censured, as the declaration proceeds, were, such as are expressly the resolved doctrine of the church of England, and those he is bound to maintain: some of them are fit only for the schools, and to be left at more liberty for learned men to abound in their own sense, so they keep themselves peaceable, and distract not the church. And surely to leave such points, not determined in our articles, to learned men to abound in their own sense, without distracting the people, was just as much in favor of Calvinism as of Arminianism. If, afterwards, he found that learned men would not confine their disputes on these points to the schools, but carried them into the pulpit, distracting the people with them, and therefore got from the King a prohibition of preaching upon these controverted points, it was in exact consistency with his declaration, and just as much against Arminianism as it was against Calvinism. And if, perceiving that the mode of studies in our universities at that time, by reading Calvin's institutions, hung a bias on their minds, he endeavoured to take off that bias, and leave the institutions of the church of England to their literal and grammatical sense, this could not be opening a way to Arminian opinions, unless those opinions appeared to unprejudiced minds the genuine sense of our articles. This might be a prudent method to restore the genuine sense after being rested by misrepresentation: but could never be calculated to introduce one that was a stranger to it. And so far as this sense left room for moderate Calvinists and moderate

derate Arminians, the latitude was originally in the article, and no artifice of Laud's.

You blame Laud, and the three bishops who joined with him, for intimating the propriety, on this occasion, of following the resolution in the time of Henry the eighth, that, *in case of any difference in the church, the king and the bishops should determine the matter in a national synod.* For, say you, *Who made this difference? these very bishops. And was it not most reasonable, that they should be both judges and parties?*^p But these bishops did not make the difference; but Montague and his adversaries. And if the bishops had made it, they were but four: and their proposal was, not to have it referred to themselves, but to the whole synod.

You ask, *Had they forgot, that Henry the eighth, passing by the bishops and the national synod, made the universities of Europe judges of a very important point of doctrine?* But let me ask, in my turn, *Would you have had the universities of Europe made judges of the meaning of the articles of the church of England?* Those who followed Laud in contending for a latitude in subscribing, you censure for calling matters in the dispute between the Arminians and the Calvinists, *points of no consequence, which may be held either way, without any detriment to the common faith.*^q That the moderate opinions of each are so, we have seen to be the opinion of Bp. Hall, (p. 72,) one, who assisted at the synod of Dort, as well as of those who followed Laud.

You say, that *no such question, as, whether the guilt of sin is to be charged on God or the sinner, can be decided without bringing the supreme God into judgement as a party with one of his creatures, and subjecting him to the sentence of another of them.*^r

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Words

^p Confess. p. 275.

^q Confess. p. 280.

^r P. 282.

Words highly irreverent : though I hope, and charitably believe, not meant to be so. The scripture indeed hath used the figurative expression, *that thou mightest overcome when thou art judged.* And he invites us to a consideration of his ways, the event of which he foresees. But shall man, upon this, presume to think of literally bringing God into judgement, and subjecting him to his own sentence ? and cannot, without doing this, the question be decided, whether the guilt of sin is to be charged on him ? We know certainly, *a priori*, that it is not. And though some writers have made shocking approaches towards asserting, that it is, I cannot persuade myself, that they intended to assert it, or even thought it, how immediately soever it may seem to flow from their positions. But if your meaning be, for I confess myself to be at a loss about it, that, whatever men may assert, or whatever they may think they find asserted in scripture, concerning the actions of God towards his creatures, the question ought never to be put, whether it be consistent with his known attributes : I apprehend, on the contrary, that such a question may be well put, though not rashly and contemptuously, yet reverently and considerately ; and where scripture is concerned, with a view to discover whether the passage hath not

* Rom. iii. 4.

† Deum non tantum ad damnationem, sed etiam ad causas damnationis prædestinasse quoscunque libuit, verum esse cognoscimus. *Beza contra Castell. Artic. de naturâ veri et falsi Dei*, p. 417. — Damus reprobos necessitate peccandi, eoque et pereundi ex hac *Dei ordinatione constringi*, atque ita constringi ut nequeant non peccare atque perire. *Zanchius de naturâ Dei*, p. 571. — Reprobi ad utrumque hoc malum præcisè prædestinati sunt, ut æternum puniantur et *necessariò peccent* ; et quidem ideo peccant quo justè puniri possint. *Piscator, Resp. ad duplic. Vorstii part. p. 220.*

not some other meaning, which ought to be preferred. For though St. Paul silences the petulant objector with a reproof, Rom. ix. 19, 20. yet in the same epistle, iii. 5, 6. he allows a different sort of person to ask, *Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance?* and answers calmly, *God forbid:* for then how shall God judge the world? In these words he plainly alludes to those of Abraham: *That the righteous should be as the wicked that be far from thee; shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* Gen. xviii. 25. seemingly a bold expostulation; but one, which God knew to proceed from an humble heart anxious for his glory. With the like spirit, we may allowably make the like inquiry. And when we make it concerning any text of scripture, we do not first admit, that God hath acted in such or such a manner, and then question, whether it was just, or good, or wise to act so: we only examine, whether the appearance, that such an action would be contrary to those attributes, is not strong enough, to put us on seeking for another interpretation of the place,

But whatever your meaning may be, how do you draw any consequence from it to the point in hand? You say, *If occasion is taken for such disputes, from articles of religion of human device, and if in particular such a dispute may be raised from the express terms of our own articles, should not a serious and considerate man be cautious how he subscribes them? would it not be inexcusably rash to take it for granted that they contain matter of no consequence?* But do our articles give more occasion for such disputes, than scripture doth? You say that the scriptures *rightly understood* give no just occasion for any such controversy. This implies that they

may be *wrongly understood*; and when they are so, give occasion to these disputes. Our articles, built on these scriptures, may also be *wrongly understood*. Yet neither scripture nor the articles give just occasion for them. Doubtless all persons ought to be cautious what they subscribe: but none ought to be immoderately so. And have they, who do not understand the articles in a sense which makes God the author of sin, need to be cautious how they subscribe? or have not their adversaries? Surely our clergy cannot be blamed, who conceive that the compilers, to prevent despair or licentiousness of living, have determined against the Supralapsarians, that there is no secret decree of God which hath *fated* some men to sin, and esteems the sins of others as *none*; whereby he would become the author of sin to both. Upon the whole then, should not a serious and considerate man be cautious how he needlessly wrests the articles to a contrary sense, insisting that they are rigid Calvinism. As to your concluding question, it was never imagined by any one, that the articles contained matters of no consequence: but that many of the disputes raised upon them are of none, may be easily seen.

Another thing, you tell us, which draws in subscribers of the present age is, that, whereas Arminianism was heretofore esteemed to be the back door to popery and arbitrary power, that notion has, upon examination, been found to be utterly groundless. This plea also you think a false one, though there needs very little examination to find out the truth of it. What connection have God's predestination, Christ's death, free-will, and grace, the manner of the workings of grace, or the perseverance of believers, with popery and arbitrary power?

Tindal

Tindal saith, there is none between either of the two last, and the five Arminian points condemned at Dort. And you answer, that he did not so much as know what those five points were. But can you shew, that the real five points are more connected with popery and arbitrary power, than those which he took for the five? If not, it is needless to enquire whether his account of them be accurate. You go on to say, that the Calvinists, too certainly inferred the lawfulness of resisting wicked princes from their principles of election and grace. But are we to believe the certainty of this inference on your bare word? for you attempt no proof of it. Why may not a person, who is not one of the elect, be intitled to a crown, as well as to an inferior magistracy, or to an estate? Or can he, according to Calvinistical principles, be intitled to none of these, that the saints may possess both the kingdom and the earth? Be so good as to speak out, and tell us also, how you will know the elect from other men; or whether every one may reprobate whom he pleases? Calvin doth not say, that the *doctrine, contrary to that of resisting unrighteous princes, is civil idolatry*: much less doth he infer the lawfulness of resisting them from his principles of election and grace: nor doth Heylin represent him as doing it,* but you misrepresent Heylin. Grotius, I doubt not, asserted that the Dutch Arminians had great *reverence for the civil power*: and so they ought. But I can no more believe, that he said *infinite reverence*, than I can that *the English Arminians went still further*, though I conceive that they went too far. But on what did they build this more than infinite reverence? why, they first *excluded election from any share in the foundation of dominion*.

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And

* See History of Presbyterians, p. 21, 22.

And so, I believe, did every sober man in the nation. And why should their reverence of the civil power be too great on that account? Oh, but they *substituted indefensible hereditary right, jure divino, in its place.* And if they did, was that part of their Arminianism? In which of the five points is it contained? And how can you for shame slip this tenet in, as an Arminian one, to serve your purpose, though you know, that the Dutch Arminians never held it, and that, for a century past, the Arminians of the church of England have had no higher an opinion of it, than the Calvinists of the church of England?

But you say, that, by means of this doctrine, *resistance, even to a Nero or a Caligula, became a damnable sin.* But why by means of this doctrine? St. Paul, who probably had never heard of it, pronounces resistance to Nero a damnable sin; which you might have done well, on this occasion, to remember. But was St. Paul therefore a friend to arbitrary power? No, he leaves all men, when injured and oppressed, to the remedy which their civil constitutions afford. Even under a Nero, a Roman uncondemned was not to be beaten; and, if beaten, was intitled to redress against the magistrate: and the falsely accused might remove his cause from a prejudiced judge and appeal unto Cæsar. Yet compliance with the laws was a gospel duty, either by an active obedience or a passive submission: *if I have committed anything worthy of death* (he means not in his own private judgement but in the judgement of the law) *I refuse not to die.* The case of a prince's invading fundamental laws and abdicating, he had

had no call to determine, and was too wise to do it needlessly. But you know, it seems, some worthy persons, who think that resistance, even to wicked princes, cannot be justified without recourse to the theology of the puritans. Now, if they mean, that resistance to all wicked princes cannot be justified without it; I would only add, nor with it neither. But if they mean, that resistance to such a one, as I have just described, cannot; it is really too much, after expecting us to take your own word for every thing that you say, to expect we should take that of your friends also. But suppose Arminians in any place should happen to be, what the principles of their sect can never make them, abettors of arbitrary power, to argue from thence that they were *popishly* inclined, is a most absurd inference. Will the friends to such a power in their prince, subject him to the controul of a superior potentate? Perhaps it may be said, distressed princes may be glad to compound with his holiness for *some* power, against rebellious subjects who would grant him *none*. Let such rebellious subjects consider this, who, from their principles of election and grace, endeavour to drive their princes into this distress. As to Charles the first, all his injuries from the Calvinists could not drive him into popery, although his queen was assiduous to intice him to it. ‘ I bless God’ (said he, to Apb. Usher, when about to receive the Lord’s supper) ‘ that, in the midst of these publick distractions, ‘ I have still liberty to communicate . . . may ‘ I so receive comfort by the blessed sacrament, ‘ as I do intend the establishment of the true re- ‘ formed protestant religion, as it stood in its ‘ beauty in the happy days of Queen Elizabeth, ‘ without connivance at popery.’² And the same

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historian

² Rapin, fol. ed. vol. II. p. 490.

historian allows that he was undoubtedly very zealous for the protestant religion, as professed in the church of England. And I as readily allow that he was no Calvinist. App. Laud is as undeservedly represented by you, as at least leaning to popery. Spare your virulent reproaches on this head, at least till you have obliged the world with as able and rational a defence of protestantism, and as effectual an overthrow of popery, as that prelate hath done, in a book which, Bp. Burnet says, is *one of the two best books we yet have.*^a

But still the poor Arminians, you are resolved, must and shall be inclined to popery. For *indulgences*, the very part of popery which set Luther on opposing the rest, *were founded on the merit of good works; and that again on free-will; and, what is more, were so founded* [I suppose you mean, *the merit of good works was so founded*] by St. Paul's own reasoning: *To him that worketh is the reward, not of grace, but of debt.*^b But St. Paul doth not name free-will here. How then doth he found the merit of good works upon it? Nor doth he name *merit*, but only *debt*: which may, by stipulation, be due without merit. Nor doth he mean, that to every one, who works, a reward is a debt due. Our Saviour hath decided the contrary, Luke xvii. 7—10. Besides, all Christians, whether you allow them free-will or not, perform and ought to perform good works: yet, you will not say, that all or any of them merit by these. Nor do the Arminians themselves say it, but condemn the papists for saying it, and no wonder. But even if merit were possible, I cannot see that purgatory, saint worship and indulgences must follow: nor do you add a word to prove it; but content yourself with affirming, for the entire satisfaction of all the

^a Pref. to Exposit. p. iv.

^b Confess. p. 286.

the world, that *they who will take the pains to read Montague's appeal* — will easily discern that *their apprehensions were not groundless.** Is not this adventurously said by one who had told us, but a few pages before, that he *had not Montague's appeal*, and only *supposed* his doctrines?† This is a new invention in the art of controversy, very commodious for some writers; a device to prove what you please, without being at the trouble of consulting books: it is but *supposing* the authors of them to say what you would have them say, and then boldly appealing to their authority. Like you, I have not Montague. But I will venture to affirm, that, in Heylin's introduction to the life of Laud, the other work quoted by you, nothing can be found to justify those apprehensions of the puritans, which you mention.

In the note to your next paragraph you ask pardon for having cited from memory in your last edition, and correct your mistake in this. Your ingenuousness deserves commendation; and I shall be glad to see all your mistakes acknowledged and corrected in your next edition. In the same paragraph, in defence of Calvinism, you say, *When it is considered, that so able a writer as Dr. Clayton, the late Bp. of Clogher, could find no other way of establishing the free-will and free-agency of man, but by putting such limitations as he has done upon the prescience of God, no reasonable man would hastily conclude, that the Calvinists have nothing material to say for themselves.*‡ But how could a writer of Dr. Clayton's abilities presume to put limitations upon any of God's attributes? Why it seems it was, that he might establish the free-will and free-agency of man. If so, I fear your former argument will prove the Bp. of Clogher to be a rank papist; and that, by opening a door to free-

* Ibid. p. 287.

† P. 271.

‡ P. 288.

free-agency, he hath opened a gap to let purgatory, saint worship, and indulgencies, break in upon us. Alas! that good and conscientious Arian subscribers should fall under such suspicion! Nay, the very principles of protestantism, as laid down by you,^f by this method of argumentation, will be found to lead directly to popery: for they, leaving private Christians at liberty, and restoring them to the privilege of working out their own salvation by their own understandings and endeavours, establish their free-agency; and free-agency introducing in train, purgatory, saint worship and indulgencies, protestant principles must end in popery: But then, luckily enough, if you procede but one step further, we shall find popery must end in protestantism again. For, as you have drawn out the pedigree, *free-will* begets *merit*, *merit* begets *indulgencies*, and *indulgencies* begot the *opposition of Luther*.^g So we go round and round, according to your state of the case, in a *necessary* circle, which it is impossible to prevent; protestants must become papists, and papists must become protestants. What a clear system is here of free-agency? and *what reasonable man can now conclude, that the Calvinists have nothing to say for themselves?* But what if, after all, these Arminian doctrines, which are to make all men, who embrace them, papists, are not, by your own confession, settled points, even amongst the papists themselves? You not only quote Grotius, who saith, that the school opinions disputed in Holland, which you tell us were the same with those disputed in England, had not been decided by the church of Rome, but you add your own authority to his.^h You acknowledge that the Jansenists,

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^f See Confess. p. 1, 2.

^g See p. 286, 287.

^h P. 274.

and you might have added many others of the church of Rome, hold, in the main, the Calvinistical opinions. Only you would have us think, that if Jansenius's book had not been condemned, as it was in 1653, *his followers in the next generation, if they adhered to his opinions, would have left the church.*¹ Now, if they adhered to his opinions, they could not be less likely to leave their church for the condemnation of his book. Yet they have adhered to them, and not left their church, for more than a whole century : and no men have more strenuously endeavoured to make converts from protestantism. So that Calvinists may be full as good keepers of the back door of popery as Arminians.

Surely then, upon the whole, if you will reflect with any coolness, you must see abundant cause to retract your accusation ; and not labor any longer to revive an obsolete clamor, in opposition to scripture, common sense, and fact, merely to pay your court to the almost extinct race of old puritans.

But whether Arminianism leads to popery, or not, the deniers of free-agency, it seems, have much to say against the truth of it, as three great philosophers, Hartley, Thournsayer and Gay have shewn.* As you rest the matter here, I shall leave you in possession of whatever weight their names may carry with them, without opposing any others to them, but only desiring every one to consult his own breast on the subject.

You go on now to say, that *those old worthies, the puritans, had good reason to expect the return of popery from the whole conduct of Laud and his friends.*¹ If you do not blush at having written this ;

¹ P. 296, 297.

* P. 287, note.

¹ Confess. p. 289.

this ; all your friends, who see it, and have read or heard of the character of that prelate's conference with Fisher, will blush for you. He had his faults ; and, besides his political errors, and the general error of the age, intolerance, another was, that in the church he loved pomp too well : but if his writings are not able to vindicate him from the charge of inclining to popery ; if his successful conduct in reclaiming persons from that church will not sufficiently prove his averfeness from popery, even the author of the Confessional can have no pretence to escape suspicion. For, that he hath written as good a book against it, and made as many converts from it, I never heard. And therefore unless he can make that appear, let him take shame to himself for this scandalous and groundless abuse.

And though these were seasonably stopped in their career — that is, by chopping off the Archbishop's head, &c. — Good-natured soul ! — Yet — the church of England has been, and still is, though by degrees imperceptible to vulgar eyes, edging back once more towards popery." You admit this is a fact which vulgar eyes cannot perceive but by the authority of your testimony : I have the misfortune to have these vulgar eyes also ; and having, with great astonishment all the way, arrived at your 289th page, cannot be induced to believe any thing upon your bare affirmation. And your own eyes appear to me to be no clearer than those of the vulgar ; indeed something more disordered, from the instances produced by you in proof of this assertion, in your preface ; which, upon examination, prove gross misconceptions in yourself. That the church hath lost its security, in a great measure, against popery, and
all

all heresy and error, I acknowledge : yet not by holding different opinions in the article of predestination, which you think *must have happened at all events*, though men had been ever so *candid, capable, and upright, throughout,*^a but from that poisonous sophistry, introduced in 1712, of subscribing the articles in the subscribers sense and not in that of the imposers. By which artifice, the employers of it have so undermined the Christian faith in the compass of about 50 years, that they begin to take heart, and conceive hopes, that they *may possibly live to see the way they have been preparing, gradually opening to the accomplishment of their wishes.*^b And that this may lead as well to popery as to Arianism, your own method of argumentation will prove: for if one man can bring himself to assent to and subscribe the articles in an Arian sense, I would desire to know what security the church hath that another doth not put a Roman Catholick sense upon those articles which concern transubstantiation and purgatory?^c And if Anticalvinism be sufficient to justify a suspicion of inclining to popery, the contriver of Arian subscription, Dr. Clarke, as well as his principal followers, and your good friends, are exposed to the same suspicion, for they were all Anticalvinists. So that the great and alarming increase of popery, in these kingdoms, may be thought by your own principles of reasoning, to be owing in good measure to Arian subscribers and the encouragers of it.

You tell us, *Dr. Stebbing was obliged to lower his high church notions to battle the Papists.*^d This was not the point to be proved : and yet even this point you have not proved, only affirmed. The point

^a Note at p. 288.

^b Confess. pref. p. xx.

^c P. 293.

^d Note at p. 298.

point to be proved was, that anticalvinistical notions were favorable to popery. Hath the doctor been obliged to lower any of *these* to battle it? That *the clergy of the church of England hath constantly disclaimed all connexion with popery, or any design or disposition to promote that cause, you say, is but an equivocal proof of a different spirit.* This indeed, sir, is no equivocal proof of your spirit. It must surely strike every candid person with horror, to find so many thousands of reputable men, through successive generations, suspected by you of gross hypocrisy and villainy, and this suspicion published to the world, on such frivolous pretences as you have alledged. God grant you to repent of this dreadful uncharitableness, and forgive you!

In proof, indeed, of our *edging to popery*, you refer any one, *who is desirous to see these apprehensions verified in particular instances, to a pamphlet written by Dr. Du Moulin, some time History-professor in Oxford, printed in 1680.* I have not been able to get a sight of this book. But if those advances were visible in 1680, they have certainly not been carried on since; for, if they had, they must in above 80 years more have brought us remarkably near to each other: whereas, on the contrary, you acknowledge, that, even now, vulgar eyes are unable to discern the approach. And therefore, if, in Dr. Du Moulin's time, the church of England had been edging towards the church of Rome, it must, since that, have been edging back again. However, his *last words* were published in the year you mention, and are a retraction of all the personal reflections he had made on several divines of the church of England, Dr. Stillingfleet, Durell, Patrick, and others. We usually give most credit

credit to the words of dying persons, acknowledging, and repenting of the injuries they have done. *His last words*, therefore, I recommend to your perusal; and God grant you may make a proper use of them! They are to be found in page 11. 'As for my books, in which I mixed many personal reflections, I am now sensible I vented too much of my own passion and bitterness; and therefore disclaim all that is personal in them; and am heartily sorry for every thing I have written to the defaming any person. I humbly beg God, and all those whom I have wronged, pardon, for Jesus Christ his sake, and am resolved, if God spare my life, never to meddle more with such personal things: and do earnestly exhort all people, as a dying man, that they will study more love and mutual forbearance in their differences; and will avoid all bitter and uncharitable reflections on one another's persons. And as I earnestly pray those worthy men of the church of England to have charity and tenderness for the dissenters from them; so I beg of the dissenters that they would have a due regard and respect to those of the church of England: of many of whom I say now, Let my soul be with theirs! And that all true protestants among us may heartily unite and concur in the defence and preservation of the holy reformed religion, now by the mercy of God settled among us. And that men of all sides may, according to St. Paul's rule, cease to *bite and devour one another, lest we be destroyed one of another*; and that whereunto we have already attained, we may walk by the same rule; hoping that if any man is otherwise minded, in some lesser things, God shall either revele that to them, or mercifully forgive it, through
 Jesus

‘ Jesus Christ ; into whose hands I commend my
 ‘ spirit, and desire to appear before God, in and
 ‘ through him, who gave himself for me : and
 ‘ therefore do now study to learn of him, to be
 ‘ meek and lowly in heart, and to love all the
 ‘ brethren, as he hath loved me. This in sin-
 ‘ cerity of heart I sign,

October 5, 1680. Lewis du Moulin.’

The publisher of the pamphlet adds, p. 15,
 ‘ Would to God that they who still persist in
 ‘ their invectives, and have since this doctor’s
 ‘ death published, under his name, an addition-
 ‘ al *Account of the church of England’s advances*
 ‘ *towards popery*, without the knowledge of his
 ‘ wife and other relations, would be pleased to con-
 ‘ sider this narrative ?’

*The third inducement our modern subscribers have
 to plead, is, that the doctrinal articles concerning
 grace, free-will, predestination, &c. are susceptible
 of an Arminian sense Archbp. Laud, as
 we have seen, was the earliest patron of this device.*
 That these articles are susceptible of a sense, that is,
 what you call, Arminianism, is certain ; because the
 compilers meant to warn people against a predesti-
 nation which was contrary to conditional pro-
 mises, not to ascribe their damnation to God, but
 to their own fault ; and so to accord grace and
 free-will as not to maintain either to the denial of
 the other. This appears by a summary of doc-
 trines, published by them about 8 years before the
 articles came out ; and from the *Reformatio Le-*
gum, drawn up in the same year. Archbp. Laud
 therefore was not the earliest patron of this de-
 vice, of encouraging those doctrines under the
 authority of our articles, but our first reformers :
 Nor was he the earliest or any patron of the *double*
 sense ;

sense ; because he always contended for the *one* sense, which was Anticalvinistical and Antipelagian ; and, to recover that sense, which had been in some measure obscured by prejudices drawn from studying Calvin too much, he recommended the plain literal sense of the articles, in which you allow (p. 298.) no refuge can be found for *various* senses. You therefore needlessly disquiet yourself about the mysterious behaviour of our contending clergy ; who, you think, to be consistent, should take just their opposite parts. But those, whom you compliment with the character of the *more rational* part of the English clergy, (although from other of your accounts *not the honestest*), and who are the most strenuous advocates for a latitude in subscribing, may, without any inconsistency, vilify the memory of Laud, who was no patron of their hypocrisy. And the others may zealously contend against a double sense, without lessening their esteem for his learning and piety (however they may differ from him in political principles), for he contended against the double sense as zealously as themselves. I mean not that the articles were drawn up so against Fatalism, as not also to condemn the excesses of Pelagius. I all along insist that both were condemned. If there be a Calvinism that admits of conditional promises ; (Art. 17.) universal redemption by Christ's death ; (Art. 31.) and possibility of falling from grace given ; (Art. 16.) such Calvinism is consistent with our articles ; and if there be an Arminianism now, which gives the potter power over his clay ; asserting the sovereignty of God ; his decrees to life according to his good pleasure ; and the necessity of grace to restore the will to its freedom, and supply us with the means of salvation ; (Art. 17.) such Arminianism is also consistent with our articles. Betwixt

the extremes which are condemned, nice questions may exercise the subtleties of the schools, which our articles meddle not with. Their purpose is to recommend such a reconciliation of grace and free-will, God's decrees and his general promises, as may teach us to avoid despair and unclean living; and influence us to "follow in our doings" that will of God expressly declared to us in the "word of God."

But Dr. Sykes hath so effectually confuted the pretense of the articles being anticalvinistical, that it is not likely that it will ever be revived any more." You sent us before to Montague's Appeal for a proof, from a *supposal* only of what was in it. Perhaps Dr. Sykes's effectual confutation rests upon a *like supposal*. Had you produced his effectual confutation, I would have endeavoured to answer it. But you have not attempted any confutation at all of this third plea, though you have built a great part of your book on the supposition of it's falshood; as if you hoped to force upon your reader the belief of your assertion by the dint of repeting it. And I cannot be expected to enter into a particular examination of every piece, to which you may be pleased to give a general recommendation in a few lines, as decisive in your favor. You admit it probable, that at first he did not see, that the articles were *evidently Calvinistical*.^w And how came he to see this afterwards? Is it because Bp. Burnet thinks it evident that "the" articles were made by men, who were thoroughly "in St. Austin's scheme, and that they meant" to express that?"* If universal redemption is not included in St. Austin's scheme, then his scheme is not the doctrine of our church: (Art. 31.) If it is, both St. Austin and our church hold differently from the Calvinists. And if, in this point, both

* P. 294.

^w P. 297.

^z P. 295.

both Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians are rejected by our articles, they are *evidently anticalvinistical*. But Heylin tells us, says Dr. Sykes, (in his Reply, p. 42.) that ‘in Queen Elizabeth’s reign all the Calvinian rigors in matters of predestination, and the points depending thereon, were received as the established doctrines of the church of England.’ And they were so by many, perhaps by most, at the latter end of her reign. But Strype, in his life of Whitgift, p. 435, saith, that, till about the year 1595, *Calvin’s way of explaining the divine decrees was not entertained by many learned men in the university of Cambridge*. And when it came to be received by more, were not those, who received it, opposed, as holding contrary to the established doctrines? and did not they themselves betray their consciousness of it, by framing the Lambeth propositions, in order to construe our articles to Calvinism, which appeared to them to *want* such a commodious explanation? To this indeed Dr. Sykes thinks the answer not difficult. And his answer is, that ‘the Lambeth articles were drawn up to stop the mouths of the anticalvinists, . . . to press upon mens minds and consciences the tenets of a *faction*; and, under the name and pretence of quietness, to subdue mens minds to slavish dependence upon authority. The *old* articles were not *rigid enough* for these ends, and therefore *new ones, more rigid*, were devised.’ So that notwithstanding Dr. Sykes’s *effectual confutings*, the articles are less rigid than Calvinism, by his own concession.

You condemn Dr. Sykes, and I, sir, will not acquit him, for subscribing articles in an Arminian sense, which he deemed to be originally Calvinistical, merely on the authority of King Charles’s declaration. For you say, *The declaration supposes the articles to be drawn up in general*

*words, which favor no side : allow that the articles were originally drawn up to favor one side, and what use can you make of the declaration?*¹ This is fairly urged against him, who thought the articles were Calvinistical, and yet subscribed them in an Arminian sense : but is no censure on those who think the *articles* were drawn up, not to favor either side against the other, only to point out and condemn the errors of both : and that the *Declaration* was published to allay the animosities in being before, under different names, of rigid Calvinists and Arminians, which rose from errors ; and to unite them in the profession of the same scripture truths, which the one or the other of them held, and which are expressed in the articles : at the same time engaging them mutually to bear with one another in nice and curious points, not determined in them. So that although men of different opinions in these nice and undetermined points might subscribe the articles ; yet the Declaration gave no refuge to *various senses* in the words of the articles.

You say, *For my part, I cannot but think, that an honest man must have some struggles with himself, before he can bring himself to give a sense to words, which he knows they were never meant to bear ; and especially when those words are the words of a covenant, importing some kind of security given to the publick, by assenting to them.*² The reader perhaps may wonder, that you would trust this observation with him, which he cannot fail to apply where you scarce intended it. Such struggles are aggravations of guilt in men, who persist in reaping the fruits of their prevarication, and in disturbing, by falshood and malice, the peace of a community, which they gave a fallacious security to maintain. But the reader is mistaken if

¹ P. 298.

² Confess. p. 298.

if he construes this passage as an ingenuous confession and sign of remorse : he will find it but the preface to further malice, in an endeavour to blacken the character of that good and conscientious prelate, Bp. Sanderson.

For this purpose you say, *It is certain that some very good and worthy men, by virtue of a certain sort of casuistry, have reconciled themselves to this practice* (of giving a sense of words which they know they were never meant to bear) *to avoid some present inconveniences grievous to flesh and blood.*^a

But Dr. Sanderson submitted to those inconveniences so grievous to flesh and blood, and chose rather to lose his preferments than violate his conscience. What then was his offence ? a long detail is subjoined, to which I refer the reader ; but shall collect the substance of it, as follows :

The puritans, by opposing the attempts of their adversaries with spirit and vigor, got the upper hand. What were those attempts ? why, requiring people, who approved the articles, to understand and subscribe them in their literal sense. And what was the spirited and vigorous opposition made against them ? why, seizing on people's properties ; murdering men of all ranks ; subverting the constitution in church and state ; and usurping the government. And what a spirit must he be of, who can cover, with such gentle words and seeming satisfaction, the horrors of a civil war, and approve of the desolations of his country !

When they had thus gotten the upper hand, they imposed their *Covenant and Engagement* to be taken. He himself took neither ; but honestly sacrificed his temporal interest to preserve his conscience. An integrity that reflects so much upon your conduct, that he must not expect forgive-

^a Ibid.^b P. 299.

ness at your hands. However, it seems he had an indulgent casuistry for others, though he took not the benefit of it to himself. For although he had determined that all the salvos for taking the *Covenant* were jesuitical, or hypocrisy; yet being consulted about taking the *Engagement* he determines thus: ‘Where *one* construction binds to *more*, another to *less*, the true sense is to be fixed by the intention of the imposer.’—‘If the sense of the imposer be not so fully declared by the words and the nature of the business, but that the same words may, in fair construction, be still capable of a double meaning . . . I conceive it is not necessary . . . to demand of the imposer whether of the two is the meaning? . . . but he,’ the person required to make the engagement, ‘may make his just advantage of that ambiguity, and take it in the sense that shall bind him to the *less*.’^d You admit that *some arguments follow, tending to prove, that this latter was more probably the sense of the imposers, than the other; which, you say, can be looked upon in no better light than of an attempt to insult the common sense of all mankind.*’ After which, you ask, *Did Dr. Sanderson really think that the powers then in being were such fools and triflers, as probably to intend to put no other but his lower sense upon the engagement, or indeed to allow that sense at all?* And you answer for him, that he did not think so, because he desired no copies of his paper should get abroad, ‘lest the potent party, in consideration of some things therein hinted, might think the words of the engagement *too light*, and might thence take occasion to lay some heavier obligation upon the royalists, in words that would oblige to *more*.’^e The imposers themselves might, some

^b P. 303.^c P. 308.^d P. 305.^e P. 309.

some of them, mean to bind men to more, and some to less : and it neither was necessary, nor might be possible to know, which they intended. Or they might wish men to bind themselves to more, and yet not think them guilty of prevarication, if they bound themselves only to less. The arguments produced by Sanderson to prove, that the imposers meant to bind only to the less, are not contemptible, as would have been seen, had you been fair enough to have laid them before the reader : but you thought it more for your purpose to condemn them by an arbitrary sentence than suffer them to be examined. However, considerable as his reasons were, Sanderson never declares that he thought them to outweigh, but only saith, *‘ Weighing my’* (probably it should be *waving any*) *‘ positive conclusion touching the lawfulness or unlawfulness of subscribing in universali, I shall declare my opinion only in these particulars : 1. That it is not lawful to take the engagement with a resolution to break it. 2. That whoever thinks the words of it contain a promise of any thing not lawful, he cannot take it. 3. That whoever understands them to oblige him to any thing contrary to his allegiance, cannot take it. 4. That if any man, for any temporal benefit, take it with a doubting conscience, he sinneth. 5. That if any man, after a serious desire of informing himself, what are the duties of his allegiance, and what is probably the meaning intended by the words of the engagement, shall find himself satisfied, that the performance of it is no way contrary to his allegiance, so long as he is under such force that he cannot exercise it ; and that when that force is removed the obligation of the engagement expires ; and, rather than suffer extreme prejudice, shall subscribe the engagement, since his own heart condemneth him not ;*

'not; neither will I.' This casuistry surely deserves much better treatment than you have given it: though had the casuist leaned a little to the favorable side, since it was not for his own interest, but from compassion to his suffering friends, it had been, in the judgement of charity, an excusable fault. And the liberty he gave, little as it was, was more than he would take himself. That he was unwilling his papers should get abroad, proves only that he knew not, and he never pretended to know, what construction the potent party would fix on the engagement; not that he knew, or believed, they would fix on the higher and stronger. And who, that had suffered so much, from the injuries of those violent robbers, as he had done, would not endeavour to be safe from *the spirit and vigor* of such men, however gratefully they may relish to your palate? All indeed were not so inhuman to him and his memory, as you and your favorites have been: for when he and his family were in distress circumstances from the iniquities of the times which you applaud, the great and good Mr. Boyle was so sensible of the worth and value of his casuistry, after he had written those cases of conscience which you scoff at, that he allowed him a pension of 50 pounds a year to procede in those studies. And it is certain his *venerable character* hath descended with much estimation, even to the present times.

After this hard treatment of Bp. Sanderson, grieving that so much precious scandal should be confined to his person, you endeavour again to sprinkle it upon the whole clergy of the church of England, saying, *I am heartily sorry that I cannot derive the practice of our subscribing the XXXIX Articles,*
with

with a latitude, from a more respectable origin, than these foregoing precedents.^a Meaning the solemn league and covenant and the engagement.—But what have they to do with the XXXIX articles? or what authority can Bp. Sanderson's opinion, that if any man, for any temporal benefit, take the one with a doubting conscience, he sinneth, give to an Arian to subscribe the articles with a latitude which he knows was not intended? the earliest avowed precedent of this kind was the casuistry of Dr. Sam. Clarke in 1712, which, you acknowledge brought you to give a security of this kind to the church and to the publick, either without a previous examination, to what the nature and circumstances of so solemn an act do in reality amount; or with a resolution to act contrary to your engagement. The subscribing with a latitude, in points not determined in the article, is as old as the articles themselves.

In your last chapter you make
 CHAP. VIII. your inference from the foregoing account of things, and conclude, *that in this matter of subscription, at least, a reformation is devoutly to be wished.*^a It may be so; and the more devoutly it is done, the better. But who are the men, who are to wish it? according to your representation, the laity are unconcerned in this matter of subscription; for you say, *our XXXIX Articles are of no significance to the laity;*^b the most exceptionable part in your opinion, and for the sake of which you wish all subscription abolished, is a point, as you affirm, by which *the well-being of society is not at all affected,*^c and about which you are apt to think few of the common people

^a P. 314.¹ Compare Confess. p. 206, 207, & 315.^a Confess. p. 317.^b P. 121.^c P. 357.

people form any ideas.^d As little reason have you to expect, that the clergy should wish a reformation in this matter of subscription; I mean still upon your representation : for you range them only into three classes, none of which can, consistently, wish for it with any great earnestness ; and one at least not at all. Some of them you charge with such a total ignorance and indifference as neither to examine or care what they subscribe so that they can get preferment :^e another class, under the Bps. Burnet, and Clayton, the doctors Clarke, Sykes, and others, suppose men of different opinions may very well acquiesce in subscription as it is.^f The third, under such writers as Bp. Conybeare, and the doctors Nicholls, Bennet, Waterland, Stebbing, &c. neither allow the expedience of such reformation, nor would have endured any proposals of that kind without a strenuous opposition.^g If then the church of England be composed of such materials, as you have described them to be, of a laity that is unconcerned in subscription, a clergy who care not about it, or think a reformation in the matter useless or inexpedient, where are we to find any devoutly to wish it but some person who classes with neither, and is a church to himself ; or conscientious men of different persuasions,^h not members of our church, but who, hankering after its emoluments, devoutly wish this bar of subscription removed, which was placed on purpose to keep them out ?

However, sir, as your representations of things are not always true, possibly there may be some, even of the church of England, who would allow of a reformation in this particular. The laity, I verily believe, are not so totally indifferent

as

^d P. 358.^e Ibid.^e P. 43, 87.^h P. 318.^f P. 317.

As you would, on some occasions, make them. Though not obliged to subscribe our articles, they know themselves concerned in them; as they are to be taught and join in worship with those who are to instruct them, according to those articles, in a liturgy formed on those doctrines: They therefore must judge for themselves, whether they can communicate with a church which holds such doctrines. Among the clergy, the proportion of those who have not examined these things, which proportion neither you nor I know, I would charitably hope and believe not to be so great as you would have us believe it to be; and I am willing to persuade myself they are few more than the younger clergy, who, long used to take their masters and their tutors instructions for granted, and having generally found them afterwards to be well grounded, suppose the same of their spiritual directors in this case, and subscribe from a full persuasion that the articles are agreeable to the word of God: and, till they shall find otherwise, their subscription is a guide to them what to preach, and a security to the church that they shall not reach contrary doctrines. Before examination, indeed, they cannot be supposed to wish for a reformation: but after it, they pass over to one or other of the two classes mentioned by you, and are to be found, either among those who, deluded by the commodious casuistry of your friends, Clayton, Clarke, Sykes, and others, acquiesce in the unlimited latitude of subscription in which they have indulged them; yet even these, however inconsistently, as you acknowledge it to be, do *confess* the want of a reformation in this matter and *call for it*:¹ or else they think, with Bp. Conybeare, and the doctors Nicholls, Bennet, Waterland,

Waterland, Stebbing, and others, that our articles are true, and may be usefully required to be subscribed by the clergy. These doctors indeed you say, *neither allow the expedience of a reformation in the matter of subscription, nor would have endured any proposals of that kind without a strenuous opposition.** Now, however satisfied these may have been with subscription to our present articles, it doth not appear, though you accuse them of it, either that they did not allow the expedience of a reformation of the articles, or that they would have opposed it. I have already had occasion to shew the contrary, with respect to Dr. Stebbing.¹ And the author of *the historical essay on the articles* hath shewn it of Bennet (Pref. p. 7.) and very disingenuously abused him for it. And probably every one of those you have mentioned, would have owned, that some of the articles now are unnecessary, and others unhappily expressed, at least you have no right to deny this of them, having no evidence to support such denial. To what alterations they would have consented, or their successors would consent now, you have no title to ask, till you have plainly said what alterations you require. If you answer that you desire none, but that all articles be disused, which is the truth, surely you have written the former part of your book only to shew your rancor. For what doth it signify to dispute, whether our articles ought to be subscribed, or in *what sense*, and whether they have been *honestly* subscribed, if no articles at all ought to be subscribed, or receive the assent of candidates for orders? It is idle to talk of reforming a thing which ought not to be suffered to be in any shape or degree.

You

* Ibid.

¹ Second Letter, p. 96.

You next procede to examine the force of the arguments against a reformation drawn from the impracticability of it; taking along with us the concession that a reformation is expedient and desirable.^a The concession we have freely made you, though your own malicious and inconsistent representation of persons would rather seem to prove the contrary. But here again you are skipping from a reformation of the articles, by not requiring assent to some of them, and wording others somewhat differently, to reformation in general, of which the reformation of the articles is a very small part. The reformation of them, indeed, and of other things, which you and many others would make, may be very large; and may afford a good reason against moving for alterations, which, though desirable, are not necessary. Some persons may be for altering the words in question much farther than we can approve, others would take occasion from one alteration to propose many more on very different subjects. You yourself have given us fair warning of this, in your preface, p. xiv; and you certainly do not mean less than you say. The like warning of what you aim at you give us in this chapter; *A reformation that should reach to the extent of our deviations from the scriptures (and when the door is once opened who knows how far a reformation might extend?) would not stop at a few liturgical forms and ceremonies. The conductors of it might probably procede to enquire, how far the present polity of the church stood upon a scriptural foundation? and should such enquiry be pursued to good effect, the consequence might be, that the repose of some great churchmen would be grievously disturbed, their labors increased, the nature and tendency of their present occupations*

^a Confess. p. 318.

tions greatly altered, and their temporalities reduced to a due proportion to their duties and services.^a And, if the functions and abuses are so intimately incorporated, that there is no separating them, may there not be other functions found out, which would equally answer the end of an effectual reformation?^b

So that it is not your desire, that a few small changes should be made, though you would perhaps sometimes have it thought so, in order to accuse us of obstinately opposing all. But proposals for small changes may introduce great ones. You have endeavoured indeed to persuade us, that some changes are necessary: we only think that some may be expedient. And you have omitted another head, whether attempting any, under our present circumstances, be prudent: which we must not fail to consider.

With respect to a reformation in general, (into an harangue on which, by a sleight in the art of controversy, you have let yourself, though you set out only on a reformation in the matter of subscription) you are pleased to allow, that the bishops, and other pious and learned divines, who, by the course of their education and studies, and their intercourse with clergymen of all capacities and dispositions, may well be supposed to have the clearest conception, both of what is amiss, and of the most effectual methods to bring the things into order, are the proper persons by whom a reformation in our ecclesiastical affairs should be first attempted.^c What hath put you into so particularly good a mood as to allow the bishops and other pious and learned divines to have so great a capacity of being useful, when the tendency of your book is to reject all use of them? I will not charge you here with inconsistency; it suffices to say, the allowance is made only, on this occasion, on purpose to load

^a Confess. p. 361.

^b Note at p. 362.

^c Ibid.

load them with undeserved reproaches; which design, indeed, runs through your whole performance, and, if it be carried in memory, all your inconsistencies will be found reconcileable with it.

To this effect, you say, as the only apology for their not attempting amendments, that *perhaps there may be some doubt made, whether my lords the bishops would succede in applying to the crown for the powers necessary for such an undertaking, or to the legislature for their authorizing such a reform.* And then you ask, *Have our bishops and great churchmen ever made the trial? have they been disappointed in the event of it?* Both these you venture to answer in the negative; because *a witness, worthy of all credit, had been credibly informed, that his majesty (King George II.) bath sometimes said to a late great prelate,* ‘Is there any thing, my lord, you would have me do for the church of England? if there is let me know it.’ *Upon this fact, say you, I rest the evidence, that no application bath been made to the throne, on the subject of reforming the church of England; and that, if our bishops had applied, their petition would not have been rejected.*^a Here, fir, besides your wandering from reformation of articles, to reformation in other things, you would prove, that *no application had been ever made to the throne on the subject of reforming the church of England* (during what time you do not specify) because none such was made in consequence of words said to be spoken by King George II. to a late great prelate, in what part of his reign doth not appear. But many applications had been made before, without success, from the earliest times of the reformation: particularly

^a Confess. p. 319, 320.

ticularly in relation to manners and ecclesiastical discipline; which are not contemptible points. How far you had them in your thoughts on this occasion, or whether you imagine, that the late King's gracious offer was designed to extend to them, I cannot say. Our church from its early days hath acknowledged and complained of the want of a reformation, and wished the godly discipline of the primitive church might be restored; but the bishops and great churchmen were not able to do it at that time, when, though the good and pious King Edward was well disposed, yet the general disposition was such, that Dr. Cox expressed it thus to Bullinger in 1552, ' We hate those bitter institutions of Christian discipline. We would be sons, yea heirs, but ' we abhor the rod.' And he prayed Bullinger, that he would, by his letters, stir up the great men and nobles to take particular care about this discipline. And do you think the great men and nobles are more ready to kiss the rod now, than they were at that time? The *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum* could not get passed in King Henry the eighth's, or Edward the sixth's, or Queen Elizabeth's days, when attempted in their respective reigns, though two of those princes seemed to encourage it. As little success had the Calvinist's plan in Charles the second's time, though in that part of it, which respected parochial discipline, they had the concurrence of the bishops and great men of the church of England. ' The first part, the ' parochial discipline,' say they in their MS petition now in my hands, ' is necessary to the honor of the Christian profession, to the integrity ' of worship, to the destruction of impiety and ' vice,

* Strype's Mem. Vol. II. p. 366.

† Belonging to the library of New College in Oxford.

' vice, to the preservation of the sound, the
 ' raising them that are fallen, the comforting
 ' of the penitent, the strengthening of the weak,
 ' the purity, order, strength, and beauty of our
 ' church, the unity of believers, and the pleasing
 ' of Christ, who hath required it by his laws :
 ' it is agreeable to the ancient canons and practice
 ' of the churches, and is consented to by our
 ' reverend brethren, and so is no matter of con-
 ' troversy now between us.' Our bishops and
 great churchmen therefore have repeatedly at-
 tempted a further reformation, and concurred
 with their presbyterian brethren in their attempt
 to introduce a stricter discipline, which might
 prevent, or correct and restrain, that degeneracy
 of manners so complained of, but all without
 success.

Nor had they ground to hope for more under
 George the second. In the principal points of
 faith and worship the bishops and clergy wanted
 no alterations: you and your friends that do,
 may apply for them when you think fit; but have
 no right to expect, that we should do your work
 for you against our own judgements. In smaller
 matters and circumstantialia many harmless and
 useful changes might have been, and now may be,
 proposed. But it did not appear, that either dis-
 senters or churchmen, or the people, or the par-
 liament, wished to have them brought on; or
 that those who did, would have been contented
 with them. The king had probably no one of
 these projects in his thoughts: but only a general
 indeterminate intention of offering to do any
 thing which might benefit or please the clergy,
 whether with respect to any part of their income,
 or otherwise, without inconvenience to his go-
 vernment. Mr. White, it seems, was credibly
 I informed,

informed, that he *sometimes* asked a great prelate, if he would have him do any thing for the church. I have made inquiry, but never could hear that he asked it more than *once*, in the height of good humor and gratitude, at the end of the rebellion in 1746. Therefore I conceive that, in this particular, Mr. White either was misinformed or mistook his informer. Now the sincerest kind intentions, that could be expressed on such an occasion, would naturally subside a little afterwards. And if the king expressed them more than once, it is not said, that he expressed them to more than one bishop; or that this bishop communicated them to the rest, at least as a ground-work to build schemes upon, for any great alterations. He and they might know by applications made before, or then, to the king or his chief ministers, or from their acquaintance with the fixed sentiments of either or both, that the interpretation of his gracious assurances must not be carried so far, as to expect support for proposals that would create disputes and animosities to little or no good purpose: a suspicion which statesmen are very apt to entertain of all ecclesiastical innovations, and easily find the means of infusing into their sovereigns. You *have rested the evidence*, therefore, that the bishops have made no application to the throne for reformation of the church, and that, if they had made any, it would not have been rejected, on a hear-say fact, much too weak to bear the stress of it. And it is a certain truth, that, since the time you mention, an offer was made, both privately to the King's ministers, and, publickly in the address of the convocation to the King, that the synod would be ready to enter into business, whenever it should be thought proper. Had they indeed entered in-

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(115)
to business, it is probable, that it would not have been *only* the business, or *all* the business, which you want to have done ; but you must not expect them to proceed according to your private judgment instead of their own. However, they were told it was not thought proper, that they should act at present. Wherefore, sir, by your own sentence, they are intitled to a discharge from the reproach you have undeservedly cast upon them. For you pronounce, *Let the churchmen of the establishment shew themselves desirous of, and sincere in, soliciting a reformation of our ecclesiastical constitution ; and if they miscarry in their endeavours, it is but equitable that the impracticability should no longer be put to their account.*

As you insist, that the civil government is favorably disposed to a present attempt of reforming the church ; so you will not allow the patrons of the present ecclesiastical system to put the impracticability of a reformation upon the people, or to say that the temper and manners of our people are not in a condition to be reformed.* For to this end, you say, Mr. White had described the gross body of the people in terms, which, with the addition of one or two epithets, would perfectly characterize the inhabitants of a Pandemonium : and that this description is agreeable to the sentiments of some of our great churchmen ; for Mr. White wrote *permissu superiorum*, and had his pamphlet supervised by them : and that he dressed up this scarecrow to deter a certain lay-assembly from taking matters of reformation out of the hands of the clergy into their own.† Do you then believe that this indisposition towards being reformed is not real in the people, but only a scarecrow and false

* Confess. p. 358.

† Confess. p. 320.

‡ Confess. p. 320—324.

representation ? so you seem indeed to think, in order to abuse the bishops for pretending an indisposition without any foundation for it. Yet when you want again to abuse them for being discouraged at such indisposition, as peculiar to the present, and unknown to former, times, you acknowledge that such indisposition is not feigned or pretended, but does, and always did, exist. *The prejudices, tempers, and constitutions of men, are known to be much oftener, and in much greater abundance, on the side of folly, falsehood, and vice, than of truth, virtue, and good sense. — But — these in fact had in them, in our Saviour's days, the very same perverseness and obliquity, of which we complain at this hour.** Thus, sir, you, whatever our great churchmen do, concur with Mr. White in his sentiments of the people. As to his writing *permissu superiorum*, and having his pamphlet revised by them, of which you say broad hints appear ; you mention only, that he ‘ confesses he ‘ omitted some things by the advice of those, ‘ whose judgement he greatly reverences, and ‘ cannot allow himself in any thing to differ ‘ from.’ — That he had ‘ conferred upon the ‘ subject of alterations, with a person in high ‘ station.’ — And that in another place, he says, ‘ I ‘ am satisfied we shall not stand with the dissenters ‘ for half a dozen indifferent things and ceremonies.’ Here is not the least hint that he wrote *permissu superiorum* ; and yet less, if possible, that they supervised his pamphlet. In dressing up the scarecrow, you are equally concerned with Mr. White. Your design in doing it you best know : Mr. White's you cannot know to have been such as you uncharitably and boldly charge him with. Both your accounts lay the indisposition to reform else-

* P. 338, 339.

elsewhere than on the clergy, who have often attempted a reformation, in which they were not permitted to succeed.

The clergy however must not be let off so easily; for you say, *Is it not natural to ask, how came our countrymen into this degenerate state?—does not the representation carry with it some reflection on those who should have taught them better? and who should these be, but the appointed teachers of religion? the bishops and pastors of the church, who receive some millions annually . . . for their watching for the souls of the people . . . and instilling into them Christian knowledge, and Christian principles?* The author of the Confessional, sir, will answer you; who tells us, *The plain truth is just this. The prejudices, tempers, constitutions, &c. of mankind, with respect to the expedients of reformation proposed in the Christian scriptures, have been much the same in all ages, since the heavenly preacher of them first appeared. Sensual, worldly-minded, and incorrigible men hated him, because he reprov'd their pride, their avarice, their hypocrisy, and other vices, without reserve. And such men hate such preachers to this hour, and will hate them to the end of the world. And yet such doctrines must be preached, with the same unreserved freedom, if the men who are appointed to this office would discharge it faithfully.** If the indisposition in the people to a reformation made them hate our Saviour for attempting it, and is much the same in all ages, the present indisposition then is not to be imputed to the negligence of the clergy. And this indisposition, from whatever cause it may arise, being by you acknowledged, the impracticability of a reformation by the present powers in the bishops and pastors, follows in consequence. You say, the

Christian doctrines must yet be preached with unreserved freedom: the Christian doctrines are still preached, and will be so, unless your scheme takes place: and they are inculcated, though indeed by no means so diligently as you and I could wish, yet far more diligently than they are attended to. When you invidiously complain, that the clergy of this nation receive some millions annually for instructing the people, you assert a notorious falsehood; and if the good effect hoped for from their appointment be not such as we desire, the legislature assigns a cause very opposite to yours, that '*divers mean and stipendiary preachers*' rendered such by lay-impropriators, who receive the tithes originally given to the clergy, '*depending, for their necessary maintenance, upon the good-will and liking of their bearers, are under the temptation of suiting their doctrines and teaching to the humors, rather than the good, of their bearers.*' 2. and 3. Annæ. Precept and example are all that we can oppose to the evils complained of: and where either of these is negligently wanting, we are certainly greatly to blame. And I would to God that we did all of us duly consider how big with ruin such neglect is to ourselves and our flocks! that we would lay to heart the word of the Lord to Ezekiel, *When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; and thou givest them not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.* More power to reform we have not, nor do you wish we should: the miraculous powers, which accompanied the apostles endeavours, are not vouchsafed to us, nor can the antient discipline, which our church wishes

wishes to restore, be exercised in a national church without the consent of the civil magistrate. Let us conscientiously *plant and water*, and trust to *God to give the increase*. If we faithfully discharge the watchman's part in giving warning, though *the wicked, who will not turn from his wickedness, shall die in his iniquity*, we shall deliver our own souls.

But you are angry with Mr. White for telling us, that *this very people, capricious, factious, headstrong, &c. as he has represented them, have some respect for their spiritual guides and governours; and sense enough, with all their weakness, ignorance, and want of judgement, to perceive that those who are led by their office to think continually on those things which concern religion, are more likely to judge rightly of them, than any lay-assembly whatever.*^b Had you been as attentive to your argument, as you are to reproach, you would have thanked Mr. White for this concession, rather than have made it a new occasion of scandal. For the point, on which you set out, was to prove, that a reformation was not so *impracticable* as Mr. White represented it; saying, 'The people were never less disposed than at this time to acquiesce in the wisdom, and submit themselves to the decisions, of the superiors.' And here he acknowledges, that, 'headstrong as they were, they have some respect for their spiritual guides.' Yet, certainly, the people may be too void of respect for their ecclesiastical superiors, to permit them to influence them to the due amendment of their lives, and, notwithstanding, may have some respect for them, and more than for their lay-superiors, in religious matters, for the reasons assigned by Mr. White in the above passage; to

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which

^b P. 323.^c Confess. p. 320.

which you have yourself assented, in allowing the bishops, and other pious and learned divines, by the course of their education and studies, to have the clearest conception both of what is amiss, and of the most effectual methods to bring things into order.^a But as you supposed this greater ability in the bishops, out of no good will to them, but to draw the more odium upon them for not doing what they were so well qualified to have done; so, instead of making the most of this concession of Mr. White, in support of your point, you are better pleased to turn it into a new occasion of censure on the clergy, in this manner:

Will it not be said, that the clergy may perhaps foment this spirit of faction and independence, towards their lay-superiors, the better to secure the dependence of this headstrong multitude upon themselves? Another insinuation of groundless malice. The clergy were never so free from every thing of this kind, as they are at present. But neither let your opinion, or mine, preclude the reader from judging for himself. Let his own experience and observation inform him, whether your insinuations against the clergy, at this time, have any apparent grounds: let those insinuations acquaint him, from an attentive consideration of your book, what is the view of its author. If the clergy have no other means in their power to reform the manners of mankind, than the Christian doctrines, and their own examples directed by those doctrines; what opinion must your readers entertain of one, who endeavours to destroy the certainty of those doctrines, by allowing every heterodox opinion the same authority; and misrepresents those examples by unsupported suspicions and false assertions? and may a serious at-
tention

^a P. 318.

• Confess. p. 325.

tention to the spirit which guided you in this work, lead you to make a proper atonement, and prevent that *prospect of discomfort, which must otherwise open to you, at that awful period, when every man's final account shall be called for.*¹

You seem indeed to think, that nothing can increase the licentious spirit of the people, but the negligence of the pastors :² yet, hath not even civil liberty this bad effect *incidentally*, by means of party contentions, and all their dreadful consequences ? hath not luxury the same *directly*, the close concomitant of wealth ? hath not neglect of domestick education and example, multiplying incentives to expence, dissipation, and debauchery, diffuse and scorn of attending religious instruction, invectives in print and conversation against the clergy, infidel books and talk ? do not all these things abound amongst us far more than they did in former days, and increase continually ? and still can you discover no source of national corruption, but from the faults of your brethren the clergy ? and what sort of brotherly disposition towards them is this ? Indeed, are not the faults of the clergy themselves often owing in a great measure to some of the laity, who countenance, favor, and prefer, such of them, as cannot perhaps be legally rejected, yet have by no means the proper spirit for gospel ministers ? and none perhaps are louder, than such patrons and recommenders, in their invectives against the evil, to which they so largely contribute. But without dwelling on this point, is it not evident, that our present bad state, in respect of religion and morals, and the difficulty of making it better, may arise from many causes, which have little or no connection with any misbehaviour of the clergy ? Have not all

¹ Pref. p. iii.

² P. 326.

all nations grown worse and worse, nearly in proportion as they came to be in circumstances like ours? did not the Romans grow worse and worse, till they could bear neither their diseases nor the remedies of them? Good Mr. White suspected, and we have still more reason to suspect, that our case is approaching towards this. Yet remedies must always be tried; and Christian remedies, if allowed to operate, would be effectual. But even the best of them must be administered with prudence: and no rash, doubtful, dangerous methods pursued; much less any, which are likely to make bad worse. Yours, we fear, are such: and therefore cannot admit them without strict examination. But let proposals for real amendment be made with visible good intention, and we consent to be reproached if we are indifferent about them.

Mr. White had argued the imprudence of attempting alterations in the liturgy, &c. from the bad dispositions of the times. You think the nature of the times no defence of the clergy, p. 326. And certainly it can never defend them, however it may possibly in some degree excuse them, in any thing, which they do amiss. But surely it is a good plea against their attempting what the times will not bear, what will do harm instead of good. From Mr. White you digress, intirely wide of your professed purpose, to the ancient fathers, and from thence to Mr. John Hales's opinion of them and of church authority. Excuse me from following you in this flight. At length, you get back from Mr. Hales on church authority to the first clause of the XXth article of the church of England. And here again I am ready to attend you, as that clause is related to your book, though not to this part of it.

Mr.

Mr. Hales, in his treatise of schism, printed about 1636, speaking of church-authority, saith *it is none*. And being blamed for this and other things in that treatise, he blames himself in a letter to Abp. Laud for saying in such general terms that *it is none*: but adds, that, *if in point of decision of church questions he said it was none, he knew no adversary that he had, the church of Rome only excepted*. On this you ask, *Could Hales have said this, and to such a man as Laud, if he might have been confronted with an authentick book of articles?*^a And, certainly, though he doth not make, in his treatise of schism, the least reference to the XXth article, yet his words prove that he then either did not believe, or did not remember, the now first clause of that article to be a part of it, or that, if he did, he at that time dissented from it. I add this last alternative, as a possible one, because, in the same treatise, he strongly contradicts the answer of the church catechism concerning the inward part of the Lord's supper, though without naming it. Yet he undoubtedly knew that to be genuine. But whether a man, so immersed in deeper studies, was acquainted with the different editions of the articles or not, he certainly might have been confronted by an authentick book of articles, which had the clause; Wolf's Latin edition of them, printed by the Queen's printer, with the Queen's authority, in 1563, immediately after they had passed in convocation. He might have known also, that the clause was in *many* of the printed books of articles *then* in use: for there were several editions of the English articles, with the clause, printed within little more than forty years before the tract on schism

^a Confess. p. 329, note.

schism was written, as in 1593, 1605, 1612, 1628, and many before.

So that you may see, or if you will not, your reader may, how small a matter stands for *almost a demonstration*, or, as you have softened it in your second edition, *a very strong presumption*, with you, when you please. Another, at most, would only have concluded, that Hales had not seen a copy, in which the clause about the church's authority was in the XXth article; or did not believe such article to be a true one. But it might, notwithstanding, be held for authentick by the generality; and to say, that probably the clause was not in any of the printed books then in use (in 1636) is the wildest extravagance of scepticism. For it is well known that an edition with that clause was printed by the King's printer but eight years before; besides several other editions quite up to 1579. In all likelyhood, Laud might confront Hales with an authentick book: but Hales did not know beforehand that he could. You think it incredible, that Hales should write so boldly to Laud, if there was an article against him; but it was almost as bold if there was none; and he knew Laud better than you: he had no doubt of his bearing with the frankness of an honest sensible man, and the event justified him. Indeed Hales was by nature bold and free, and, as quick wits often are, apt to be much too hasty and peremptory in his assertions. He owned, that he had spoken too generally, when he said, that church-authority was none. He still spake too generally, as a little reflection would have shewn him, when he said, that none but papists allowed it any in decision of church-questions. For he must have soon recollected, that this was very contrary to the notions of the Dutch divines at Dort,

Dort, and of protestant divines in general. And we know not to what further limitations, perhaps very sufficient ones, he might be reduced in his private conference with the archbishop : a conference, which did equal honor to both. For it shewed in a very strong light the condescension, candor, and patience, of the one, notwithstanding his natural vehemence ; and the good sense and courage for which you recommend the other, in yielding to conviction, notwithstanding his former positiveness. These things appear fully from Heylin's relation of it immediately from the lips of Hales, as soon as it was over ; who, he saith, told him, that in their debate, which lasted several hours, he found ' the archbishop, whom he ' knew before for a nimble disputant, to be as ' well versed in books as business ; that he had been ' ferretted by him from one hole to another, till ' there was none left to afford him any further ' shelter ; that he was now resolved to be *orthodox*, and to declare himself a *true* son of the ' church of England, both for *doctrine* and *discipline* ; that, to this end, he had obtained leave to ' call himself his grace's chaplain, that naming ' him in his publick prayers for his lord and patron, ' the greater notice might be taken of the alteration." Hales was made Laud's chaplain in 1638, and canon of Windsor in 1639, at which time he must have subscribed the articles, and, in all likelihood, a copy which had the clause ; for I presume none else had been printed, or perhaps used, for eleven years before. And now, sir, permit me, in my turn, to recommend the memorable Mr. Hales's *good sense* and *courage* to your imitation.

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† Life of Abp. Laud, p. 340.

In your first edition, you immediately draw a conclusion, from Hales's denial of church-authority, in these words; *It is not unlikely that Laud, upon this occasion, might resolve to stop that gap for the future, and take care that the subsequent editions should be MORE CORRECTLY printed.** You certainly do not mean to commend Laud for this *correction*, but leave the reader to chuse which opinion he pleases: either that of Burton in 1637, that the clause was an original forgery of Laud's, or that he foisted into the article anew, an *old* forgery. From the first charge, you could yourself have vindicated the archbishop, had you been so inclined, from Anthony Collins, who, in the introduction to his Essay on the XXXIX articles so often referred to by you, says, that 'it was manifestly a FALSE charge on Laud himself; for the clause, though forged, was not newly forged but of ancient date.'† But indeed, though Collins calls him a forger, as reviving an old forgery, this clause was not one; for Wolf's Latin edition hath the clause, which certainly was an *authentick* copy. For, 1. It was printed in 1563; before which year the convocation that passed the articles did not rise. 2. It is the oldest copy of the printed articles, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, that I, or any body else, know of. 3. It came out by the Queen's printer, and by her authority, *Regiæ auctoritate in lucem editi*, as it is set forth in the title-page. 4. The ratification at the end mentions, that the Queen had diligently read over, examined, and approved, the said articles.

It would be too tedious to enter minutely into the controversy about this clause. The vindication of it may be safely rested on Benner's Essay on the XXXIX articles, notwithstanding Collins's *Historical*

* Confess. first edit. p. 295, note.

† Introd. p. 30.

Historical and critical Essay in answer to it; who objects,^m I. 'That the clause is wanting in King Edward's articles, which were the articles laid before the convocation of 1562, for the ground-work of the intended articles of the church.' True; but there were many alterations, subtractions, and insertions, made in that convocation, of which this *might* be one. — II. 'That the MS. articles subscribed by that convocation, now preserved in Bennet college library, had not the clause.' — Admitted; but, 1. That MS. is not the *authentick* copy of the articles, having neither parliamentary, nor royal, ratification. 2. It was not an engrossed act of convocation, but a rough draught upon paper. 3. It doth not agree with the publick register of the articles preserved in the registry of the see of Canterbury, in which the clause was read; as appears by many attested examinations, before it was burnt by the fire of London. 4. It certainly is not the autograph from which Wolf printed his edition, as the errors of his autograph, which he has marked in the margin, are not mentioned by the collators of the Bennet MS. to be in *that*; and a remarkable one, which certainly is in the Bennet MS. is not mentioned, in the margin of Wolf's edition, to have been in the autograph from which he printed. — Collins objects, III. 'The MS. articles, subscribed by the bishops in convocation in 1571, had not the clause.' — Neither was it in the subscribed MS. of 1562, yet was evidently in the original Latin copy, authenticated by the Queen's approbation. There were many alterations made, as corrections of literal mistakes, nay additions and omissions, at least one of each kind without changing the doctrine: thus the XXIXth was

^m Introd. p. 32.

was left out in Wolf's Latin and both the old English editions before 1571, although it had been subscribed in the MS. of 1562; so that the subscribed MS. was no more the autograph from which the English articles were printed, than it was that from which the Latin one was. It was also not in Edward's articles; but there is added a clause, at the end of the XXVIIIth article, which virtually implies all that is said in the XXIXth. So again, the first clause in the XXth was neither in Edward the sixth's book, nor in the MS. subscribed in 1562; yet it was inserted in Wolf's authentick Latin copy, without altering the doctrine of the article. Indeed the very framing of the XXXIX articles implies the church to have this power: and denying the church a power to ordain any thing that is *contrary* to God's word written, or to expound one place of scripture as that it be *repugnant* to another, implies that it has a power to ordain or expound *agreeably* to scripture; and therefore the words being really of no great importance, and the former part of them at least being in effect expressed in another article, the wonder is not near so great, as at first sight it may appear, that scarce any notice was taken by any party, for a long time, of their being put in, or left out, in the several editions of the articles. Small matters were but little minded by most persons in those days. And Mr. Collins admits; 'The
' managers in the affairs of articles, and other
' convocational acts, seem not to have been bound
' by the strict words before them, in copying
' or printing them, but took the liberty of
' varying and changing some words, and striking
' out sentences on occasion, though before agreed
' on

on in convocation.^a So that a subscribed MS. is not proof against a subsequent authoritative act. The MS of 1562 is not evidence sufficient to set aside the record of the convocation house, and Wolf's authentick copy which agreed with it: and in 1571, we have subscription against subscription; if the bishops subscribed a MS which wanted the clause in the XXth, and inserted the whole XXIXth article; the lower house subscribed a copy which had the clause, and wanted the XXIXth article; for it subscribed a copy of Wolf's edition, now in the Bodleian library, with the roll of names added to it. So utterly void of truth is the suspicion of Laud's contriving or abetting a forgery, by causing this clause to be printed in 1636.

It is true the above passage, quoted from your note at p. 295 of your first edition, you have omitted in your second edition, p. 330: but no desire to do justice to Laud appears by this omission; for what Heylin calls his *constraining the printers to reprint that part of the book according to the genuine and ancient copies*, you say, *is called by Collins a FORGERY*: to which you assent, by throwing in the weight of your authority: *and surely not without reason, if, before that CONSTRAINT, there were NO Latin copies which had the clause.*^o But there were many; of which five remain to this day: one in St. John's college library in Cambridge, another in that of Bennet college in the same university,^p two in the Bodleian library in Oxford, and one in my possession. Whether Heylin's friend could find one in the bookseller's shops in Oxford at that time, is not material: supposing he could not, this is no proof that there

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^a Essay, p. 65.

^o Confess. p. 331, note.

^p Vindication of the Ch. of Engl. p. 152.

never was any, contrary to fact at this day demonstrable. Nay the English copy which was produced, was proof that Laud did not forge it three years after; and was certainly a better proof of the articles of the church of England, than the Latin book produced by the professor Prideaux, which was the *Consensus confessionum* published at Geneva. And although the MSS. and prints varied from one another; and of the latter, both in Latin and English, some read and some did not read this clause, there appears not, that I recollect, to have been any contention, or offence taken, with respect to either reading, till this year 1633. This is made an argument by Hamilton, in his *Some necessity of Reformation*, p. 14. to exculpate the puritans, who had been charged with purposely omitting this clause in the English editions of 1563: "Is it a thing likely, that so soon after the convocation, puritans durst or would do such a thing, and pass so quietly away with it, and without noise made by the bishops?" The like argument will hold as strongly to prove that the bishops were not suspected of inserting it without authority. For, as the *Vindicator* argues,^a if the question had been then moved, would Cartwright have said nothing upon it? The *vindicator* likewise mentions a book, said to be written about the year 1583, entitled, *Certain reasons against subscription to the book of articles*, in which the author objects to the 6th, 7th, 16th, 21st, 33d, 35th, and 36th, articles, yet says nothing against the 20th: nor were any exceptions made against it in the conference at Hampton-Court. Which, I think, proves, as before observed, that neither side yet thought the difference of the copies, in this instance, of any

^a Vindicat. p. 158.

any importance. Indeed in 1633 the professor, who could produce no Latin authority *against* the clause but the Geneva book, (Day's edition being as hard to come at, as Wolf's by Heylin) resolved to be furnished with one, by setting the Oxford press at work, to publish a Latin edition without the clause; which Laud forbade, and ordered that leaf, which contained the XXth article, should be cancelled, and a new one, with the clause, inserted in the place of it. A copy of which, with the *corrected* leaf, I have seen; as you have a copy of it in which the leaf was not cancelled. The English copies with the clause had been frequently printed before this time; and, I believe, never were any printed without it after the year 1579. Nor was it material whether it was added or omitted; the part that is in *all* copies implies what is added in others. You indeed say, no: and propose the terms of the Latin article to our consideration. *Ecclesiæ non licet quicquam instituire quod verbo Dei adversetur, neque unum scripturæ locum sic exponere potest, ut alteri contradicat.* By the church, you admit the clergy, or church representative, as you call it, to be meant; not the aggregate of head and members together, or church diffusive. Now, you say, *wherever there is a non licet, there is a law implied, and likewise a judge of transgressions against the law: Who then is the judge of these institutions, with respect to their agreement with the word of God? not the church representative, for there is no . . . exclusive power given her of interpreting the scripture, the consequence is, that the power of judgement devolves upon the church diffusive, the cœtus fidelium, as it is called in the foregoing article.* The law is the word of God: the judge of our interpretation of

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* Confess. p. 333, note.

it is neither the *representative* or *diffusive* church, but the lawgiver himself, our only judge, Christ Jesus : to whom the church *representative* must account for their discharge of their duty in diligently or negligently, truly or falsely, interpreting God's word; and the church *diffusive*, for the rashly receiving a false interpretation or causelessly rejecting a true one. And whether this interpretation be given collectively by a synod, or singly by individual pastors, they equally claim and exercise the authority of interpreting the word of God. The first is the safest : but neither have authority to force assent : every one must judge for himself as far as he is able ; but must answer to God for the use of the reason, opportunities, and ministeries, given or appointed for him, when the law hath been sufficiently promulgated and explained. Your friend Collins therefore objects impertinently and unfairly, that, in the *Reformatio legum*, in which book is a system of *doctrine* as well as of *discipline*, "all the present words of the XXth article appear, except the clause of the church's power." I say, this is *impertinently* objected, if the divines, concerned in drawing up this system of *doctrine and discipline* in 1552, or the puritan faction in the parliament of 1571, who moved for confirming it, thought the church really had this power, though in the place referred to, p. 3. (it should be p. 5.) they do not expressly, only implicitly claim it : and it is *unfairly* objected, because, though not expressly claimed in that place, yet at p. 105. *De rebus in synodo episcopali tractandis*, cap. 22. we have the following words, *Si qua corruptio veræ doctrinæ obrepserit, coarguatur. In scripturis quæ cum animarum offensione perperam exponuntur,*
juxta

juxta fidei orthodoxæ convenientiam explicentur. Et quæ fortassis non intellecta conscientias perturbant, fideliter excutiantur et declarentur. What they gave to an episcopal synod they certainly meant not to deny to a provincial or national one. And the church representative in convocation exercised this power in framing their articles of religion, even without the clause; and the parliament assented to it in giving their sanction to them.

After this cruel treatment of Archbishop Laud you return to the plea of *impracticability*, and apply it as a scourge to the *modern* governours of the church. But here I must beg you to observe and keep in mind, what the real plea of the sincere and genuine clergy of the church of England is. They say, that the alterations which you and your friends would make in respect of our articles, liturgy, &c. are most of them for the worse: and that such of them as may be for the better, are neither necessary nor of very great moment; and are in the present state of the nation, to all appearance, impracticable, or likely at least to produce more harm than good. Either you must disprove this, or you prove nothing. You say, that, while the clergy complain of the people, *others see that the infection of the times hath laid hold even on these venerable personages, and produced appearances of secularity which disparage their sacred characters.** So far as this is true, I am heartily sorry for it. But they, of whom it is true, cannot have due weight to assist you in reforming any thing. And if the fault be general, as you seem to think it, your first step should have been, not writing against confessions, but reforming the clergy. One would imagine, indeed, by your intimation, p. 362. that *there is no*

K 3

separating

* Confess. p. 335, 336.

separating functions from abuses, your scheme to be the abolition of the clergy, and the finding out other functions, which would equally answer the end of an effectual reformation. By what authority you would do this you have not signified. And I hope we are not so bad as to require the utmost extremities. This at least I know, that when one of our Saviour's apostles had denied him, and all forsaken him, he did not revoke his appointment of them, but with proper exhortations renewed their commission. Surely then the most blameless of his followers ought to observe the rule, *If a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*" And remember, sir, there are temptations to faults still worse than secularity. Very blameable degrees of that sin may, in times and countries of licentious indulgence, creep in upon well-meaning persons: and the sight of it must grieve every truly pious mind. But if there be any one, who, instead of being concerned at the failings of his fellow-ministers, and the hurt done to religion by them, takes pleasure to publish them, to aggravate them, to enlarge upon them with expressions of scorn, contempt, and malevolence, how sincere soever his zeal may be, hath along with it, whether he perceives it or not, an evil spirit the most directly opposite to the genuine temper of Christianity that possibly can be. Admonish us therefore, sir, and we will join with you in the good work. But form yourself first to a disposition of good-will towards us, and perhaps we shall appear in a better light to you. United friendly endeavours to amend ourselves and each other may do much, though many imperfections must still be suffered. But I acknowledge myself
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" Gal. vi. 1.

one of those *weak short-sighted brethren, who cannot comprehend*, how either abolishing the function of Christian teachers can contribute to the *planting and bringing forth of more evangelical fruit*, or how taking pains to make them thought worse than they are, can be the means of making them more useful in a nation already so full of prejudices against them.

You tax these teachers, particularly the eminent prelate who died in 1761, with persuading his brethren to conform to the world, rather than to attempt reforming it; because, he says, 'in all proposals and schemes to be reduced to practice, we must suppose the world to be *what it is*, not *what it ought to be*.' Which you think inconsistent with other of his doctrines, *unless conforming to what the world is, and conforming to the sovereignty of Christ in his own kingdom, are precisely one and the same thing.*' Now, the bishop in these words recited, hath certainly not directed us to conform to the world: but that, if we would attempt a practicable reformation, we must suppose the world to be *WHAT IT IS*, not *WHAT IT OUGHT TO BE*. And surely this is right: for, if we suppose the world to be *WHAT IT OUGHT TO BE*, what occasion is there for attempting to reform it? Suppose it to be as *IT IS*, and we see reason sufficient to attempt it by such means as are in our power. But till God and the state shall give us more, we must not expect miracles, or snatch the sword from the hand of the magistrate. You tell us indeed that the Calvinists, at Dort, whose discipline you recommend, held that the civil magistrate, who did not enforce the church's decisions, ceased to be a child of God, and might be deposed from his office, and that many of the English puritans, perhaps the greater part of them

K 4

*them in secret, entertained the same notions.*¹ We have before seen, that 'they required kings and 'queens to subject themselves to the church, 'and submit their sceptres, and throw down 'their crowns before the church, and lick the 'dust of its feet.'² Nay, they actually did make both the king and chief pastor lay down their heads at their feet; which *spirited* enterprize you are not ashamed to applaud. Such reformation we will never attempt, for it is beyond our commission: but the conscientious discharge of our functions, for this purpose, I hope we shall persevere in, how apparently fruitless soever our former trials may have been. For, though *the light of our testimony may appear to be wholly extinguished, and the seed we sow totally buried and corrupted, yet the one may blaze out, and the other spring up and flourish, in its due season, how, and where, and when, we are unable to foresee, or even to conceive.*³ This, I trust, may be, at least, as well-grounded a hope to us, as it is to you; and not be discouraged by your ill usage and unjust reproaches, which even so great a favorite as Bp. Hoadley cannot escape.

You tell us, that they, *who desire to put a negative upon a review of our ecclesiastical system, will own that the body of the people sit in darkness: which, you say, implies, that, were they more enlightened, they would have no inconsiderable objections to the forms, in which they now acquiesce.*⁴ And we indeed own, as every body must, that the body of our people and of all people are ignorant; and we heartily wish they could and would have more knowledge: but this by no means im-

¹ Confess. p. 264, 265.

² See before p. 59.

³ Confess. p. 375.

⁴ Confess. p. 338.

plies, that, if they had, they would have considerable objections against the forms in which they now acquiesce. Many of them, we are persuaded, would acquiesce in forms against which they now object; and many would acquiesce in them more entirely and firmly than they do at present.

You represent your adversaries as admitting, that the light which their people who sit in darkness will not bear, is *that of the gospel as preached by Christ and his apostles*: and you think it not a little strange, that it should be unseasonable and intolerable after the gospel hath been taught near 1800 years.* But pray, sir, of what adversaries are you speaking? It is very true that many hate the light, because their deeds are evil; and hate the ministers of the gospel, because it is the light and the truth. And many always have done so. But who ever pleaded this as a reason why any part of the gospel, as preached by Christ and his apostles, should be concealed or should not be diligently inculcated? No true and consistent member of the church of England, I am sure. You fight therefore with shadows, or however not with us, in combating such arguments. Prove that any of your changes are required by the gospel; and we are ready to adopt them immediately. But we expect proof, not assertion only. And in matters which the gospel hath left indifferent, circumstances of times and prejudices of persons may well be regarded; and long usage even respected.

Our Saviour, you say, *paid little respect to the established church, but openly opposed their forms of worship and points of doctrine.*† True, their hurtful ones: but he recommended the observance of other

* Ibid.

† Confess. p. 339.

other traditions, Matth. xxiii. 1, &c. Besides, he intended to destroy their church. As you intend to destroy ours, no wonder if you act as you understand him to have done. Only I hope you do not claim quite so much authority.

To prevent the clergy from justifying themselves in a prudent accommodation to the times, from the example of St. Paul, who became *all things to all men, that he might save some*,^a you inform us, that *some of his accommodations turned out very unhappily; and that you have sometimes thought, that there are some, no very obscure marks, discernible, in his epistle to the Galatians, that he thought he had formerly gone too far in those compliances.* There is indeed some obscurity in the text of this epistle on this very point: and the sense is rendered more doubtful by the diversity of readings; but the marks of the apostle's thinking that he had formerly complied too far, are so obscure as not to be at all discernible. The ancient Latin copies make him a complier in the very instance of Titus; whom, being a Gentile, he did not constrain to be circumcised, till he came to Jerusalem; but there, by reason of some false brethren who watched to take an advantage, he yielded a temporary compliance, lest diversity of opinion should extinguish the gospel light. Primasius, a commentator of the sixth century, at the words, *Quibus neque ad horam cessimus*, says, *Latinus habet, Quibus ad horam cessimus*. According to which reading he did yield, even in the instance of Titus. But his prudent accommodation of himself to the times and seasons is as evident in this very case, supposing, as I believe it is, that the Greek reading is the true one: namely, that he did not yield to those factious Jews, *no, not for*
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^a 1 Cor. ix. 22.

^e Confess. p. 343.

an hour, or in the least. For he would not preach his peculiar doctrines publicly, only conferred privately with Peter, James, and John, upon the subject, who approved his opinion, but perhaps would not countenance his opposition to the Jews till that opinion was confirmed synodically; and then, backed by such an authority, St. Paul would not allow one who was altogether a Gentile to submit to circumcision. The former compliances, in which he thought he had gone too far, I read nothing of: but that he made many prudential compliances and accommodations *afterwards* I do read, and so do you; for *he thought it necessary to circumcise Timothy, because of the Jews which were in those parts.*^f But this it seems, in your opinion, was a fault in this great apostle, who must come to school to learn Christianity from the author of the Confessional. At least, to deter the clergy from prudence, you represent St. Paul as having too much of it: or perhaps you really think him inexcusable for not being as vehement as yourself.

You say the world is not mended, since Bp. Hoadly *advanced the maxim of considering it as it is, rather than as it ought to be.* A maxim, which, in your sense of it, I hope never was his; and, in the right sense, hath always been every man's of common understanding, on all occasions. I wish the world were mended. But if we are to exchange continually what doth not appear to have done much good, for its contrary, whatever harm it may do, I shall think it farther off from amendment than ever.

To an author, who alledges, that *speculative truths* ought not to be received at the expence of the peace and quiet of the world,^h you answer, and for ought

^f Ibid.^g Confess. p. 344.^h P. 349.

ought I know very justly, that *no religious truth or error is merely speculative.*^l But the practical influence of some is much less than of others. And accordingly, there are cases in which teachers may and ought to leave their hearers for the present in ignorance or even mistake. Our Saviour *had many things to say to his disciples: but they could not bear them then.*^k St. Paul *fed the Corinthians with milk, and not meat, because hitherto they were not able to bear it.*^l And though, ever since the complete publication of the Christian covenant, every article of it is necessary to be taught, and no falshood ought at any time to be taught, yet there may be persons, congregations, countries, ages, to which the declaration of whatever any one knows or thinks to be true, in relation to religious matters, may do unspeakably more harm, than the improvement of their understandings by it will do them good. Whoever conceals useful things for his own private benefit is a selfish secular man: but he who proclaims dangerous ones, if to raise his own character, is a vain one; if to depress others, a malicious one; if without attention to consequences, an indiscrete one: whereas fear of introducing disorder and confusion, even where it is excessive, nay groundless, implies a benevolent humility. *Knowledge puffeth up; but charity edifieth.*^m May you not do well, sir, to judge yourself by these considerations, before you go on to judge others with severity?

You applaud Dr. Middleton's system of the miraculous powers, &c. as beneficial to religion and society: and on that foundation raise a question, which you think will distress us. Before I

proceede

^l P. 351.^l 1 Cor. iii. 2.^k John xvi. 12.^m 1 Cor. viii. 1.

proceed to that, permit me to observe, that the common system had been very well defended against popish conclusions from it long before Dr. Middleton was born: that I never heard of one man who became a protestant, or was kept from becoming a papist, by reading what he had wrote on the subject; but I have heard of more than one, whom it perverted to infidelity, or confirmed in it: and that the world, I believe, is pretty well agreed, which effect he designed it should have. Permit me also to digress so far as to add, that the *almost demonstrated* doctrine, as you think it, of the soul's annihilation at death, is no way necessary to guard against Romish superstitions, hath never, I conceive, made one deist a Christian, but hath a strong tendency to make every deist a wicked man: though, I am verily persuaded, from the author's general character, that his intention is good, And therefore I wish that nothing in favour of either of these tenets had ever seen the light.

And now to your question: *If a person should think that some system, under the protection of an establishment, was just as pernicious to the cause of true religion, and just as void of truth and reason, as the system of miraculous powers in the post-apostolick church, what is to be done? is this man to sit down to acquiesce with the herd, under the apprehension of causing a faction, and unsettling, in some degree, the peace and quiet of the world?* Now give me leave to ask you a question in return, and perhaps your answer may help me to one. The anabaptists and papists, at the time of the reformation, thought the English ecclesiastical system, under the protection of an establishment, was pernicious to the cause of true religion, &c. What was

was to be done? Were they to sit down and acquiesce, &c? I am certain you will think that they ought to have considered their differences from the establishment very carefully, and consulted the reformers and their books very candidly, and such of them as were convinced have yielded to conviction; that the rest should not have reviled or calumniated the publick doctrine, or endeavoured to raise an odium against their superiors in church or state; or have continued in stations, which obliged them to teach what they did not believe; that they should not have taught, even in more private assemblies, what the government forbad, and themselves thought unnecessary: and that if they did think it necessary to teach what authority had forbidden, they should do it with such modesty and peaceable acquiescence in the provisions made against it, as might justly induce the legislature to be as mild in those provisions as possible. Now these things, sir, we think others ought to do likewise. And if subjects would have done them honestly, and prelates and magistrates have been influenced by such behaviour as they were in duty bound, *the creed, and the whole state of the protestant world, at this instant,** we apprehend would have been a very good one.

But who, after all, are these persons, supposed by you to think *some other system, under the protection of our establishment, pernicious to religion, &c.* And what is that system? no other, it seems, than that of *the great Athanasius;†* in other words, the doctrine of the trinity as taught in our church. The opposers of that, then, reckoned amongst the anabaptists by our reformers, are the persons, concerning whom we have answered,

* Ibid

† Confess. p. 356.

answered, what they are to do. But let us at the same time consider, what we are to do. Not, surely, to admit, on your insinuations and assertions, or those of your party, that this doctrine is false, and that Arianism would be a reformation. By what right do you expect it of us? we have proved, and we are ready to prove the contrary. And therefore if you cannot acquiesce in the established belief, much less can we in your attack upon it.

That, indeed, you tell us, was quite peaceable; and we, the defendants, were alone to blame. For when some of these anabaptistical errors (as K. Edward's articles called them) were revived by Mr. Whiston, Dr. Clarke, the bishop of Clogher, and others, you admit that *factions ensued*; but you ask, *whence did they arise?* we must look for them among the clergy.⁹ That is, they were very inoffensive, in contradicting the doctrines of the church, which were established for avoiding those errors; and the faction was in those unreasonable governours of the church, who would needs support the old doctrines, taught here ever since we separated from Rome, for 200 years; and generally assented to throughout the Christian world for 1400. These harmless souls desire no disturbance: they only wished to be indulged in the peaceable liberty of giving the lye to the church, and of sharing in her preferments for so doing. So gentle-spirited are they still, that, in return for restoring these *sensible and conscientious brethren to the Christian liberty* of publicly teaching what the church judges to be heresy, and of enjoying her emoluments, they think there is no need, FOR THE PRESENT at least, to preclude others from expressing their belief

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⁹ Confess. p. 356, 357.

of, and their veneration for, every thing established in the church of England, in as high terms as they can invent.* And are not these very modest men?

But I perceive, say you, a *fly orthodox brother* *Soft and fair!*—as you presently subjoin, Why is an orthodox brother to be treated by you with less civility than a heterodox brother? But what of this *fly orthodox brother*? why, he asks, if the present attempt to reform, according to the detestable systems of Arius and Socinus . . . does not confirm the suspicions of those who imputed these views to the free and candid disquisitors? To which you reply, *Soft and fair!* Let the disquisitors answer for themselves. . . . Had you shewn a disposition to reform those necessary matters which they laid before you, . . . time and credit would have been given you for the rest. This I presume to say on the part of the disquisitors. It is therefore you yourself, not the *fly orthodox brother*, that will not let the disquisitors answer for themselves. And doubtless they, or such as thus answer for them, think themselves very gracious in giving us time and credit for banishing the doctrine of the Trinity. But perhaps this temporizing would be doing what you have, for so many pages, just been condemning. They do not indeed say, how much time and credit they would give us. I believe very little, after they had power in their hands. At least you shew very little of such a spirit of toleration. But would they or you be ever so forbearing, we cannot take time and credit: for that implies, that, sooner or later, payment must be made. Now the doctrine of the trinity is what we cannot ever give up.

Many

* Confess. p. 378, 379.

* Confess. p. 358.

Many of the wiser and more thinking part of the clergy, as you inform us, have been long sick of the Athanasian creed, and have, by degrees, disused it in their churches ; and many of the congregations, where it has been so disused, if by accident an officiating stranger should read it to them in its course, have been known to signify their surprise and dislike by very manifest tokens. Either the disquisitors were none of these wise and thinking part of the clergy, or they were insincere in their professions, for they say, ‘ We unfeignedly assent to that creed, ‘ on the whole.’^t But what do you mean by *many of the congregations* expressing their dislike of it ? If you mean *many* IN the congregation, you may say true ; and so you may have formerly seen many sit down when the king was prayed for. If you mean many whole congregations, I doubt the truth of your assertion : and, if true, it will only prove that many of your *wise and thinking* clergy, have habitually broken their solemn promise, that they would conform to the English liturgy as by law established ; and then some in their congregation, having been misled by them, may have expressed their surprise at what they had not been used to ; and some their dislike at the minister’s reading what they did not know he was to read ; and some perhaps at the damnatory clauses. But all this doth not prove their dislike of the doctrine : but they may have joined in other forms that expressed it, the very same day.

But the bishop of Clogher, than whom no man knew the world better, was persuaded, that if my Lords the bishops would but shew themselves inclined to amend, what they cannot but acknowledge to be amiss, they will find the laity ready to assist and support them rather than otherwise.” Now the

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^t Confess. p. 360.^u Ch. vi.^w Confess. p. 362.

bishop of Clogher meant by amendment, introducing his Arian system; and he did not find the laity ready to assist him in that. You mean by amendments, besides that and several other things, depriving the clergy of their honors, and part at least of their profits. Probably a great part of the laity would come into that; but most probably the crown would not: and certainly the bishop of Clogher would have opposed it as much as any man, instead of taking that way to attain *esteem and affection*, however self-denying you are pleased to make him, without proof. And I believe the warmest of your few admirers amongst the clerical order will be full as far from agreeing with you cordially on this point, as the most strenuous of your opposers.

However, to shew your candor, *you are willing that our spiritual fathers, among whom are some persons of distinguished merit, should have the benefit of every plea that can possibly be offered for their inactivity and acquiescence in our present inconvenient and unedifying system:** And therefore of this, if any of them can make it; that though they have concurred in the support of what is contrary to pure religion, *that they have done it innocently with respect to themselves, being led thereto by INVINCIBLE PREJUDICES.*† But till you have proved our present system *inconvenient and unedifying*, our spiritual fathers attachment to it may be, what some of them have nobly proved it to have been, an unshaken constancy and perseverance in *earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints;*‡ not only with the hazard, but the loss, of all the good things of this life, and even of that life itself. And your reproaching that faith as an *incon-*
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* Confess. p. 363.

† P. 364.

‡ Jude, v. 3.

venient and unedifying system, and its professors, some of whom bore so glorious testimony in its defence as weak mistaken men, proclaim aloud the PREJUDICE you labor under, which perhaps a long indulgence of your rancor may by this time have stiffened into an INVINCIBLE one.

But had it been a sufficient plea, you will not with all your candor, allow our spiritual fathers the benefit of invincible prejudice, for acquiescing in OUR *present inconvenient and unedifying system* : and that in part because — Jerome and Erasmus had *prejudices* which were not *invincible*. And were Jerome and Erasmus OUR spiritual fathers who acquiesced in OUR system ? These therefore I pass over as nothing to your argument, however you may think it to your purpose to keep your virulent pen in exercise.

But yet, our spiritual fathers must not think to escape, you therefore add, *Come we now to some doctors of our own reformed church.*^a And you have picked out *two*, the first is Archbishop Whitgift, of whom you relate the following fact : In the year 1572, a pamphlet was published in defence of the *famous Admonition to parliament*, intituled, *An exhortation to the bishops, wherein their Lordships were reminded, 'how hard it was*
' to punish the favorers and abettors of the Admo-
' nition, because they did but disclose the disorders of
' the church of England, and only required a refor-
' mation of the same, according to the rule of God's
' word ; whereas many lewd and light books and
' ballads flew abroad, printed not only without re-
' prehension but cum privilegio. Archbishop Whit-
' gift condescended to answer this pamphlet.'^b

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^a Confess. p. 369.

^b Confess. p. 366, 370, from Strype's Life of Whitgift, p. 40.

Now, should the reader, who cannot be supposed to know or carry the dates of every occurrence in his head, imagine, from the mode of dressing up this paragraph, that Whitgift was *then* archbishop; that the exhortation to the bishops was to *him* among the rest; that *he* was reminded of suffering lewd and light books and ballads to fly abroad *cum privilegio*, whereas it was the archbishop's duty to see to the licencing of the press; and that *he, when archbishop*, condescended to answer this pamphlet: I presume, sir, he would only fall into the snare which you have purposely laid for him. Whitgift, at that time, 1572, was only a doctor in divinity and master of Trinity College in Cambridge. So that all the insinuations in the paragraph, and the bold assertion that follows it, are false; *archbishop* Whitgift did not condescend to answer that pamphlet.

I thought it proper to observe this, that the reader may be the more upon his guard, after your *unfairness* hath been so often detected. Let us next examine the fact itself. This is not represented according to the authority you quote to justify your account of it. Strype, in the place referred to, says nothing of the bishops being reminded how hard it was to punish the favorers of the Admonition; which yet you distinguish, as if they were the words taken from his Life of Whitgift, p. 40. where he is recapitulating the contents of the second pamphlet, viz. *The exhortation to the bishops*. Something like it was said before, in his account of another pamphlet, called the *Preface*, and you joined them together to form this contrast: the favorers of the *Admonition* are punished for disclosing the disorders of the church, while lewd and light books and ballads are printed *cum privilegio*.

The

The reasons, mentioned in *the exhortation to the bishops to deal brotherly* with the authors of the *Admonition*, were five : 1. *Because they were their brethren.* To which Dr. Whitgift replied, ' That notwithstanding they were brethren, they were not therefore to escape punishment for their offences : and that some of them, in open speech, and manifest signs, accounted not the ministers of the church *their* brethren ; nor acknowledged them as such.' — 2. *Because they ought first to have discovered unto the world by the word of God, how true or false they have written.* 3. *Because they did but disclose the disorders of our church of England ; and therefore only desired a reformation of the same, according to the rule of God's word.* To these two he answered together ; ' That these men had been talked with, and heard what they had to say for themselves ; but their haughty minds and good opinion conceived of themselves would not suffer them to see their errors.' — 4. *That the papists lay abroad in their dioceses untouched.* The doctor replied, ' That if this was true, it was a great fault, and could not be excused ; and he prayed God it might be better looked to : but this was no good and sufficient reason for the impunity of others.' — Lastly, it was objected, *that many lewd, light books and ballads flew abroad, printed, not only without reprobension, but cum privilegio.* His answer you have fairly given us, ' It was a fault to suffer lewd ballads and books touching *manners* ; but it was a greater fault to suffer books and libels, disturbing the peace of the church, and defacing true religion.' But when you collect his meaning from those words, you dilate it into three points, no one of which was asserted or intended by him. And I leave

to the reader's judgement whether you must not, in every one, have accused him contrary to the conviction of your own conscience, unless you have taught it by long perversion to say what you please. Thus you draw them forth :

*Which was to say, 1. That lewd books and ballads, printed with privilege, neither disturb'd the peace of the church, nor defaced true religion.**

Now it was impossible he should mean, that they absolutely did neither : no Christian of common understanding could mean it : but that such things, being relished by few besides the grossly vicious and inconsiderate, and usually also self-condemned, were not to be compared for mischief with attempts to stir up the serious people of a whole nation to *strife and confusion, and every evil work.* 2. *That provided the church might quietly enjoy and practice her forms, rites, and ceremonies, titles, and emoluments, it was the less material what were the MANNERS of her people.* Now, he mentions not a syllable of forms, rites, ceremonies, titles, and emoluments, much less of their preference to *good manners.* And he could not, and his writings prove beyond contradiction that he did not, think the manners of the people less material than these things. But he might well think, that when a publick establishment was formed for teaching the people both good manners and piety, publishing wild invectives against it, with a view or a chance of setting up, if any thing, somewhat much worse in its stead, was more pernicious in its effects, though not more criminal in the intention, than dispersing some immoral pamphlets and songs ; the evil of which, though a necessary object of animadversion, would be less extensive and more easily restrained.

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* Confess. p. 370.

In short, that though it were an injury to steal the fruit of the tree in an instance or two; yet it was a greater, to destroy the tree, *root and branch*.
 3. *That true religion consisted in those forms, rites, ceremonies, titles, and powers, which the puritans were for defacing.* But why so? St. Paul taught that *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*, consists not in ceremonials and externals: yet he taught, that by the wrong use of these things *we may destroy him for whom Christ died.*^d And so might the archbishop judge, that true religion by no means consisted in those forms, which the puritans were for defacing; but that still, in their unjust prejudices against those forms, and their factious endeavours to overturn them, *they walked not charitably, followed not the things which made for peace, and by which one may edify another.*^e And therefore were highly blameable. Indeed, that this was in fact his manner of thinking appears from the dedication of his answer to Cartwright's Reply: In which 'he dared boldly to affirm,
 ' that all points of religion necessary to salvation,
 ' and touching either the mystery of our redemption in Christ, or the right use of the sacraments,
 ' or the true manner of worshipping God; were
 ' as purely and perfectly taught, and by publick
 ' authority established in this church of England
 ' at that day, as ever they were in any church,
 ' sithence the apostles time, or then were in any
 ' reformed church in the world. The which to
 ' be true, those that were learned (even among
 ' the mislikers of this present state) could not, nor
 ' would deny.'—'What shall we then think, says
 ' he, of those men that are so far from acknowledging this singular and unspeakable benefit, proceeding from the mere mercy of God; that are

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' so

^d Rom. xiv. 15, 17.^e Rom. xiv. 15, 19.

' so far from being thankful for the same, and
 ' from desiring the continuance of it with hearty
 ' prayers; that by all means possible they seek
 ' rather to obscure it and deface it; because in
 ' certain accidental points they have not their
 ' fancies and proper devices. . . . How much
 ' better had it been for them to have proceeded in
 ' teaching necessary points of doctrine, and ex-
 ' horted to obedience, to concord, to godly life
 ' and conversation.'^f So that whilst the puritans
 made *true religion* to consist in *their fancies and de-*
vices, which were only a changing of *forms,*
rites, ceremonies, titles, and powers; Dr. Whit-
 gift made it to consist in truth of *doctrine, obe-*
dience, concord, and godly life.

You are as unfortunate in your next instance,
 though you confess you take a *pretty long step* to
 come at him, skipping from 1572 to 1718, to
 chastise Abp. Wake for his prejudices. But by
 your own acknowledgement his first prejudices, if
 he had any, were in favor of the dissenters: and he
 by no means so inactively acquiesced in our pre-
 sent system as to oppose all attempts to improve
 it. What then was his fault? why, soon after,
 when he came to be archbishop, *he opposed the re-*
peal of the schism bill,^g though he had protested
 against it when it passed into an act; which you
 impute to his having been promoted to the see of
 Canterbury in the interval. But might not the
 dissenters also, as well as he, have experienced a
 change in their circumstances in the same interval?
 and, from finding their influence greater, be aim-
 ing at further indulgences, than they had hither-
 to contentedly enjoyed, or than could be safely
 granted them? For dissenters, as well as bishops,
 are

^f Life of Whitgift, p. 33, 45.

^g Confess. p. 371.

are capable of being *intoxicated with power*. Besides, his point was to oppose the repeal of the bill against occasional conformity, which was joined with that of the schism-bill. He spoke of the latter only as needless to be repealed, because it had never been executed; though you, by mistake, represent him as alledging that it was *one of the main bulwarks and supporters of the established church*. These words were indeed spoken in the debate, but not by the archbishop, according to Tindal. But this point hath been already considered, and his Grace's conduct vindicated, in the answer to your Preface, p. 86, 87.

If this is the worst your diligent malice can find to object to our spiritual fathers of our reformed church in 200 years administration, your intended invective becomes a panegyrick; or if you selected a few only out of many, in indulgence to your own ease and that of your readers, you would certainly have picked out the strongest instances to prove your point. And how foreign to your purpose do they appear?

After this, you give solemn admonitions of their danger to all in high stations, who do not endeavour to reform the corruptions and deficiencies of the church. I hope they will all consider them seriously, and be influenced by them. But you are not to judge for them, but each for himself, though doubtless with the utmost care, what things are real corruptions or deficiencies, and of what moment; what they can do towards amending them; what they may hope or what they may fear from exerting themselves in such or such a manner. Some, who attempt less than they should, may mean well though they mistake, and should not be all given up, as seized with a judicial *spirit of slumber*. Many who do little or nothing

nothing in the points that you have at heart, may be doing a great deal in others to better purpose. You observe how *suddenly the free and candid disquisitions sunk into oblivion*; and represent it as the effect of *art and contumely*.^a I believe less was never used, if so little, on any like occasion. Why may not the truth be, that the book was of less importance than you imagine? Still you comfort yourself, that it *may be working silently and imperceptibly to a good end*.[†] And you add, what every true Christian will be rejoiced to see fall from your pen, that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*. Apply faithfully, dear sir, to yourself and your friends this excellent maxim, which seems so providentially shot into your mind. You cannot point it against us, the established clergy: *we are sleeping on and taking our rest perhaps for many years to come*.[‡] You and your associates are certainly wakeful and active: think whether you are not over vehement. Such undoubtedly were your predecessors, the puritans, who thought ‘they ought to give their lives in defence of their platform, though every hair of their heads were a life.’[‡] And grew at length so wrathful as to say, ‘It stands us in hand now or never to prosecute it [their fanciful reformation] with all celerity, without lingering and staying so long for parliaments.’ And to ask, ‘What will you say, if we overthrow the bishops and all that government in one day? If it come in by that means, which will make all your hearts to ach, you must blame yourselves.’ Accordingly, in 50 years after, *with spirit and vigor* they destroyed the constitution in church and state.

^a Confess. p. 375, 376.

[†] Confess. p. 376.

[‡] See Rogers on the Articles, Preface, N°. 12.

[§] Life of Whitgift, p. 334.

state. Such, though confined to a lower degree, hath been the zeal of every succeeding generation of dissenters; and such the importunity, as you call it, of *the clamorous disquisters*.^m Such, I fear, is now the disposition of those *active and lively spirits who are not easy under want of employment*;ⁿⁿ but laboring, that *the light of their testimony may blaze out, either in the present or future generation*:^o to what effect you have sufficiently intimated. All the former, in their day, should have considered what the last I hope will not fail to consider, as the warning comes from so unexpected a hand, that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*.

At length, you desire *the reader would recollect, that your subject leads you only to one particular, the case of subscription to human creeds and confessions*. And pray, sir, how came you to forget what your subject was, for so long a time? *Such of these, you say, as have not an agreement with holy writ, ought not to be retained in the church*. And so say we: but you add, *nevertheless, it may be allowed, as due to the ignorance and prejudices of well-meaning people, not to be expedient to discontinue the use of them all at once*.^o An excellent reformer! to feed the ignorance and prejudices of the people by indulging them the use of creeds which are not agreeable to scripture! on what principles can this be justified? I suppose you learned it from Turretine and your friends at Geneva, who, ‘through regard for some members of their society, allowed doctrines to be publickly taught, which it was in some measure scandalous to speak to the people about.’^p Such are

^m Ibid.ⁿⁿ Pref. to 1 Edit. p. iii.ⁿ Confess. p. 375, 376.^o Confess. p. 377.^p See Chandler's case of subscription, p. 163, 168.

are the sentiments of reformers who cannot bear subscription! You are sensible that *it may be demanded, Would you have the church to authorise and send forth ministers among the people . . . without guarding against preaching false and erroneous doctrines?* And you think, *the answers to the 2d, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th questions in our office of ordination, seem as ample security in this behalf, as any Christian church can desire, or can be authorised to demand:*^a namely, 'declaring that he
' is persuaded that the holy scriptures contain
' sufficiently all doctrine necessary to eternal sal-
' vation — that out of those scriptures he will in-
' struct the people committed to his charge —
' [that he will be ready, with all faithful dili-
' gence, to banish and drive away all erroneous
' and strange doctrines contrary to God's word]
' — will use both publick and private moni-
' tions — be diligent in reading the holy scrip-
' tures — to frame and fashion his ownself and
' his family according to the doctrine of Christ—
' and will maintain quietness, peace and love a-
' mongst all Christian people.' Now by these
promises, which I have already made, and you
are pleased to authorize the church to continue
to demand, I think myself obliged to be ready
to banish and drive away the doctrines of Arius,
Socius, Anabaptists, Papists, Fatalists, and Pe-
lagians; because, from diligent reading of the
holy scriptures, I am firmly persuaded they are
contrary to God's word: you, from the same
promises, and the assumption of being *more sen-
sible and conscientious*, think yourself obliged to
banish and drive away the doctrines of Athanasius,
as contrary to God's word: the same obligation
would lie on other sects and hereticks, under your
new

^a Confess. p. 380, 381, 382.

^b Confess. p. 383.

new establishment; for all plead the authority of scripture. Thus your church, formed upon your own sensible plan, would do, what yet you presume no church will do, contend for a right to teach *false* doctrines; for some of those doctrines being *true*, you justly infer the contrary must be false. And what a quiet and settled state must this prudent expedient introduce, to open a door to all strange and erroneous doctrines; and then oblige the maintainers of them severally to banish and drive the others away? In your second edition indeed, you have put this promise in a parenthesis, because *it may be difficult to banish and drive away the doctrine, without banishing and driving away the man who holds them*. But as far as the argumentative persecution of the pen goes, men, though they may honestly hold contrary opinions, may, and ought to endeavour to banish and drive one another away. This puts me in mind of what I have somewhere read, a like method of treating monkeys: they invite them by several tubs of rice placed in the middle of their wood, with a sufficient quantity of ratans or small canes laid across the tubs, which furnishes the monkeys, as they severally advance to their food, with weapons to beat one another, till they are disabled from escaping those who purposely set this trap to catch them. You will not own this consequence to be your design: but that you were not ignorant of it is evident from what you say at page 2. *The reformers were unhappy in adopting, as a self-evident maxim, that the true sense of scripture could be but ONE, and if this ONE sense was not ascertained, a very moderate share of sagacity would enable the leading reformers to foresee, that diversity of opinions concerning many points* of

* Note at page 382.

of doctrine would be unavoidable: and that, from hence, frequent occasions of offence would arise among themselves, not without some advantage to the common enemy. Your scheme therefore is fitted, whether intended or not, to give the common enemy an advantage over us.

You condescend to state an objection which may be proposed against the sufficiency of the only declaration which you would have clergymen make: that it is *general and indeterminate*, and gives us *no evidence of the man's opinions*. And you condescend to answer, that we say *the articles also are general and indeterminate, and susceptible of different senses.* *Tantum rem tam negligenter!* Do we say the articles are as indeterminate as the declaration, with which you would have us contented, or any thing like it? you know we do not: you know it cannot be said with any color of truth. You know you propose the declaration because it is *general*, and to get rid of subscription to the articles because it is *too determinate*. It is shamefully insolent to think of putting us off with so slight an answer. You have lengthened out at will digression upon digression through the whole of your book. Surely; now you are coming to the end of it, you should at last, once for all, fairly look in the face of what you must have been sensible from the first is our principal argument against your main scheme, and strive to make some reply that will bear hearing. I have dwelt so long and so much on this head, that I need not do it again: and shall therefore only observe, that you have done the only thing you could; observed the orator's rule, when a difficulty cannot be solved, either to say nothing upon it, or

adhibere

adhibere quandam in dicendo speciem atque pompam, et pugnae similem fugam."

It would of course be perceived, sooner or later, that your favorite declaration alone was not sufficient. Subscription, when added, gave it a different force. After a person had declared what he took to be the sense of scripture in the most necessary points, an engagement that he would make it the rule of his teaching and acting carried in it some good security. Till then, it was, in comparison, of very little weight.

There is indeed, as you say, something in this single declaration, which amounts to an acknowledgment of the divine authority of the scriptures." And you introduce from Dr. Hartley a doubt, whether subscribing, and consequently declaring, even thus much, is not overdoing. But *this you think is spinning the thread too fine.* I wonder you should. For, according to your notions, what church hath a right to require more of any candidate, than to say, that he is a Christian? on what do you ground such right? and particularly why do you impose upon him a necessity of assenting to so ensnaring a proposition, as Dr. Hartley conceives it to be, that the scripture is the word of God? I have already observed to you, that this could not be the original confession of gospel-faith. And though you have endeavoured to defend it against him as a safe one; I know not whether, if he were living, he would acquiesce in your sentiments. But surely he would not acknowledge it to be an authorized one. By what authority can you require a man to believe the books of the Old and New Testament generally received among Christians? what if he should reject one or more books, or parts of books, out

■ Cic. de Orat. II. 72.

▼ Confess. p. 385.

of the usual canon? He may yet be a good Christian! You therefore seem willing, that the subscriber should pitch upon what copy or canon he will.* Suppose then that he adds the *Apostolical Constitutions* to the canon; would you allow him to introduce all the offices, doctrines, ceremonies, directed there? Suppose, on the contrary, that, with the author of a book, intitled, *The morality of the new Testament digested under various heads*, printed in quarto, 1765, who calls himself in the title, *a rational Christian*, he should hold, that every passage in it is forged which contains any miraculous fact, or doctrine of mere revelation: would you allow such a person for a teacher? Are you willing then to retreat, with Dr. Hartley, this one step further back? And when you have done that, whom will you allow to be called Christians? Some have accounted the Mahometans a Christian sect. There is an authentick instrument in the archbishop's library at Lambeth, in which a number of English Socinians apply to the emperor of Morocco and his subjects as their brethren in the faith. Others have doubted of other sects whether they were Christians or not. Settling these points may give employment to more new Confessionalists than one. But I beg you to consider, sir, why will you lay yourself open to such questions? why give delight to papists and infidels by such extravagancies? They wish no better than that we should find no place for the sole of our foot. And doubtless there are difficulties in fixing fundamentals. But this is surely a reason, not for running wildly into any extremity that presents itself, but for laboring to agree in *words of truth*

truth and soberness. I hope your readers will feel this : I wish you may.

Indeed you seem, after writing so much and so warmly, not quite to have determined your own plan. You think somewhat favorably of the scheme, that *the candidate should deliver the articles of his faith in a form of his own, because he best knows his own conceptions.*[†] But the intent of subscription is, that others may know them : that the bishop, the congregation, the publick, may be acquainted with them. And is it the best way to this, that he should deliver them in words, of which few of them will ever hear any thing ; and which they who do hear them cannot have time enough to consider fully ; and which may be satisfactory to some of them, and not to others ? But this, it is alledged, was the ancient way.[‡] But why should it be retained or restored, after it had been found, as it must be, inconvenient ? But you would have it used only for a limited time, and by elder divines. For what time, and by divines of what age, you do not tell us. And it comes out at last, that you want it to be tried, only to disgrace it by the confusion which it must introduce.

You object against *any peremptory assent to articles as agreeable to the word of God*, that it seems *absolutely inconsistent* with the candidate's carrying on the study of the scriptures, as he promises in the ordination office.[‡] Surely it cannot be *absolutely inconsistent*, unless, what you will, scarcely allow, our articles contain *all* the truths of the gospel. But, with respect to the articles, why may not his further study of the scripture confirm, rather than weaken, his assent to them ? Or, if it should have the contrary effect, there is no incon-

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sistence

[†] Confess. p. 388.

[‡] P. 389.

[‡] Confess. p. 390.

sistence between his assenting to them at one time, and dissenting from them afterwards; though there is one between his dissenting from them, and pretending to go on teaching agreeably to them.

The modesty of the term, *I am* PERSUADED *that the scriptures contain all things required of necessity, &c.* pleases you extremely.^a But if the persuasion be a firm and steady one, as I hope you would have this be, where is the difference between being *persuaded* of a truth, and *assenting* to it? Peremptory assent, whatever it means, is a phrase of your own. But you say this persuasion concerning scripture may be obtained with *a thousandth part of the pains necessary* to prove that our articles are agreeable to it. And with much less pains it certainly may. Whether with a thousandth part, neither I nor you know how to calculate. But is this any evidence, that no further declaration should be required? If it be, the mere declaration, that there is a God, would be best of all. For the knowledge of that may be obtained with abundantly less pains still.

You go on to an anecdote in the life of Dr. Prideaux, that Dr. Busby would have founded a catechetical lecture in each university for the instruction of the undergraduates: but that both universities rejected it: on which you make many reflections. Concerning the fact, I can only say, that no wonder if a proposal was rejected, which, according to your account of it, would have subjected every candidate for a bachelor's degree to the will and pleasure of Dr. Busby's catechist, whether he should obtain it or not: nay, I dare say, you yourself would be much better pleased, that the candidates should have no instruction

^a P. 390, 391.

^b Confess. p. 392.

struction at all, than such as Dr. Busby's institution would have procured them. For the rest, I believe much more care is taken, both in preparing and examining young persons for orders, than you insinuate: and I wish much more still were taken: but what is all this to the business of your book?

Indeed you represent the design of it so differently yourself in different parts, that it may seem difficult to ascertain it. But I think few, if any, of your readers will come to the conclusion of it without being satisfied that your aim is to destroy our whole ecclesiastical establishment. I earnestly entreat them therefore to ask themselves, whether they are willing to follow you all your lengths? And not answer hastily, till they have coolly considered what a prodigious change the accomplishment of your plan would make in the constitution of this country. The clergy will do well to reflect, what prospect they will have, when once this great machine is set to work, of obtaining the things they wish, and avoiding those which they may fear. The people in general are concerned to be aware, that, in proportion as it makes a progress, the influence of the crown, and the balance of power in the nation, must be vastly altered; many millions of property put into different, and who knows what, hands: a large part of our system of laws repealed, and new ones enacted in their stead: patronages must be at an end, our universities totally new modelled, and who can tell how? the union with Scotland broken, a fundamental condition of which is preserving two established churches in their present state: the whole face of religious profession and publick worship must not only undergo a grand variation at the first; but be varying afterwards continually,

for want of something to check it; which an established church doth very greatly, without the least use of force; because a mere publick leading will be followed by the generality, if such writers as you will let them alone. It will be said perhaps that all this may be pleaded against overturning a popish establishment. And part of it may, though by no means all. But is there the same need of destroying a protestant one, as of substituting it in the place of a popish one?

And you, sir, would do well to consult yourself, whether a proposal, big with such consequences, be a modest one for you (whoever you are) to make. Perhaps you expect only a small part of it to take effect: and perhaps none may. But will it be for your honor to have proposed so much, and have it treated with total disregard in point of practice? And to have discovered so much rancor in yourself, and thrown so much unjust reproach on others, for nothing? And if any attempt of putting it in practice in any particular should be made, can you tell which that will be, and how far it will go? Your pretence is, that the church of England is leaning towards popery: and there never was a more groundless one. But will it not rather discourage that church's opposition to popery, to see the protestants of this stamp deserting and reviling her, and intent upon her destruction? Would not a friendly communication and explanation be of more use against the common enemy?

Our dissenters also may do well to consider, how far they may be affected by your scheme. The church of England is a great support to many doctrines, which the orthodox dissenters respect. Especially in that important doctrine, to unsettle which is a great, if not the principal, design

design of your book. They and we are harmoniously united, and have joined our endeavours in support of it when attacked publickly. Thus, in the year 1719, the London ministers observed, ' This is no part of the controversy between the nonconformists and the national church, and therefore, in this our *common* cause, we affect not to act separately from them . . . what ever may be pretended ; this is not a controversy about some metaphysical abstract notions, of personality, subsistence, modal distinctions in the divine nature ; in these there will always be room left for different speculations and sentiments.—— But it is a controversy about the very object of religious worship . . . the articles of faith we defend, are such as the nation openly declares for, and what we have solemnly subscribed in courts of publick record, when we received the privilege of a publick indulgence, and had long before that time embraced, upon a full conviction from the word of God.' Overturning the church of England will hurt these doctrines : and it certainly as much concerns the dissenters now, to discourage open attacks against our common faith, as it did in 1719. The clergy of the church of England in general are friends to whatever the dissenters enjoy by law ; and where the dissenters have not qualified themselves according to law, few, if any, of the clergy have attempted to give them any trouble about it, or are disposed to do so ; truly wishing well to as much toleration, as the welfare of the state will permit. In these circumstances, it would be neither generous nor equitable to attack the church, or oppose any reasonable

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request

* The Doctrine of the blessed Trinity stated and defended, Introd. p. 1, 2, 14, 7, 8.

request of the clergy, merely because they are not in favor with a dissolute age, and so an advantage may be safely taken against them. Yet what perpetual instances of this kind of bitterness do we see in the news-papers? I neither say, nor think, that all or most part of these things come from the dissenters: probably the greatest part of them comes from such as have little more love for the dissenters than for us. But as dissenters will unavoidably be suspected for part, would they not do well to clear themselves by some publick marks of candor to the church of England? Why might not the dissenters say, that the principles of liberty as much require the Episcopalians in New England to have bishops there, as the Presbyterians and Congregationalists to have Presbyters? Perhaps they may think it prudent, not only to say nothing in our favor, at home or abroad, but to join the cry against us. I will not think this is possible, among the serious and considerate; as we have not deserved it, and as the common faith is interested in the support of the church of England. Besides, persons really prudent will consider, that human affairs are subject to great vicissitudes: that though the common run of talking and writing at present is not to the advantage of the establishment, there doth not appear in the body of the people any spirit which betokens its downfall: that should the dissenters, presuming on the contrary, throw themselves into the scale of those who wish it, so ungenerous a behaviour may excite indignation: and though God forbid that we should retaliate upon them any ill usage, yet God only knows, to what behaviour vehement provocation may carry men.

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If the dissenters, or any considerable part of them, really desire an union with the church of England, on any such terms as they imagine we can grant, they may easily find proper persons and means to signify it. But indeed they must be sensible, that many of them have made it much more difficult, by changes of opinions amongst themselves, since the revolution, than it was before. If they think this union impracticable, yet why should they consider men of no religion, or of romantick notions in religion, as their friends; and treat serious and moderate clergymen as their enemies?

Your book is said to be a favorite one amongst the dissenters: some, I doubt not, are pleased with any thing which will set us on disputing amongst ourselves. But would the old dissenters really wish, that the doctrinal articles, which they have always so highly esteemed, should be set aside, and clergymen ordained without assenting to them, or doing any thing equivalent? would they themselves receive ministers without knowing any thing more of their faith, than that they profess to believe the Bible? If they would not, why should we? Nay, would not many persons of much greater latitude than they, think that this was setting the gate too wide open? And that you have gone further into one extreme than we are in the other? Is not shutting out *some*, whom perhaps we need not, safer than letting in *all*? The dissenters may come to some terms with the genuine members of the established church: but you, fond as you are of complimenting them, will keep no measures with them; as they must see, if they examine into the depths of your scheme. They must lay themselves bare without defence, else they will be as liable to a

new Confessional, as we are to the present: This indeed you have taken great pains to hide: but it peeps out perpetually. And if serious persons of either communion come once to consider the consequences, you will have little room left to boast of the reception which your book hath met with amongst them, how much soever it may continue to be applauded by those who delight in mischief.

In your postscript, I do not understand for what end Dr. Anthony Ellys is mentioned; though it is surprising that his tracts should be totally neglected by a writer on spiritual liberty. But in the place where you have introduced him, nothing is asserted, but that he *was a bishop, and he knew what was right and just, as well as Dr. Anthony Sparrow.*^f If this was all you meant, the information hath no pertinence to your subject. If you would insinuate more, the friends of Bp. Ellys are at a loss to know what it is; and with you had been more explicit, and quoted the passage, if you thought he had advanced any weak argument or mistaken fact; that it might appear, whether such false reasoning or mistake had inadvertently escaped so able a man, or been wrongly, though I hope without ill design, charged upon him.

Before I take my leave of you, I think it incumbent on me to inform you, that the MS. letters of Abp. Wake, which I have quoted in his defence, are the property, partly of the Dean and chapter of Christchurch in Oxford, and partly of the Rev. Mr. Beauvoir of Canterbury. The other MSS. and books I think I have referred to in their places. The last words of Dr. Du Moulin are in a printed pamphlet, quarto, containing

^f Postscript, p. 409.

containing 19 pages, printed for Royllon, 1680, in the Bodley Library at Oxford.

If, in the course of the letters, any suspicions or charges have dropped from my pen beyond the grounds you have given me for them, or beyond what Christian charity would allow me to urge, I am sorry for them, ask your pardon, and with them unsaid. But where deliberate malice and willful falshood have appeared in your book, I avow my disapprobation of them. To your person as a Christian brother, at least in confidence that you are so, I wish every happy and prosperous event, and, as one mean of procuring them, permit me to wish you adorned with some of those virtues, evident in the characters which you have commended in your Confessional. The *learned Cartwrights* (p. 21.) will teach you 'seriously to lament the unnecessary trouble you have caused in the church, by fomenting schism; and to testify to the world the dislike of your former ways.' With *the memorable Hales*, may you 'resolve now, to be orthodox, and declare yourself a true son of the church of England, both for doctrine and discipline.' You agree with Le Clerc in professing an apostolical Christianity, (p. 33.) acknowledge then with him 'episcopal government to be of apostolical institution; and that it is very wicked to attempt destroying it, to establish Presbyterianism, Fanaticism or Anarchy in its stead.' Let the puritans, whom you so highly favor through all your performance, engage you with them, to consent in the doctrinal articles with the church of England, and to abjure the Arian heresy. And with

* Life of Whitgift, p. 554.

† Heylin's Life of Laud, p. 340.

‡ Biblioth. Christ. T. xx. P. ii. p. 599.

with Dr. Du Moulin, to whose invectives you refer us, p. 249, for proof, that several of our most celebrated divines indeavoured to bring in popery, may you, before you lie on your bed of languishing, which an upbraiding conscience will make much more uneasy, be sensible and acknowledge, that when you mixed those personal reflections you vented too much of your own passion and bitterness; humbly begging God, and those you have wronged, pardon for Jesus Christ's sake: and while desirous that those divines would have charity and tenderness for the dissenters, at the same time intreat the dissenters that they would have a due regard and respect to those of the church of England: with many of whom in his last hours he wished, 'Let my soul be with theirs!' If you cannot yet be induced to do them so much justice, common decency and gratitude should restrain you from making illiberal returns to your benefactors. When your patrons have given you a preference to others, and the church, at your own request, hath admitted you to her emoluments, on a persuasion that you were as willing as able to teach those doctrines, which the church judges, according to the gospel, necessary to be believed and expedient to be taught, and which the state meant to encourage by her appointments; of what spirit must you be, that can complain of this preference as a violence offered you, and reproach your benefactors as doing every thing hard and injuriously by you, but forcing the pen into your hand, and compelling you to sign your name, *à coups de baton?* p. 196. Surely, sir, you were at liberty to decline the offer. And if you could not in conscience comply with the conditions, which were neither

new

new nor unknown to you, you ought, as an honest man, to have declined it, with thanks for the preference given you: not to accept it against your conscience, and then abuse your patron and the church by a groundless and malicious charge of *imposition*. Nay, even now, it is not too late to try an experiment: take up your pen once more, freely and voluntarily, and offer the resignation of your office and profits together: see who will do all but take up the *baton* to deprive you of your liberty in this case. But if you either have deceitfully obtained them, to gratify your avarice or ambition, by promising to perform the conditions which you determined not to fulfill; or if, designing to fulfill them at first, you became afterwards persuaded, that fulfilling them was unlawful, and yet resolved to keep possession of what you had gotten by means of them; on which side, think you, lies the imposition? Hath the church *imposed* upon you, or you upon the church? And if, on the contrary, you are convinced of your errors, and will conscientiously, for the future, discharge your engagements, according to the talents with which God hath blessed you, I shall rejoice in every accumulation of honor you may obtain to reward your merit, being,

REVEREND SIR,

Your sincere well wisher,

in the truth of the gospel, &c.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE my third letter went to the press, I have received the information which I had desired in my second, with respect to the Declaration prefixed to the articles, whether it were originally set out by K. James the first, or Charles the first. For the ready communication of this knowledge I return my hearty thanks to the learned gentleman who gave it. And I as freely communicate it to you, as you express a desire of satisfaction in this point, (Confess. p. 131, note.) He mentions several authorities from cotemporary writers, such as Hammond on God's Grace and Decrees, Prynne's Canterbury's Doom, and Abp. Laud's Speech in the star-chamber. And to what I had said from Heylin, at page 146 of my second letter, he says, I might have added, that he refers to the *Bibliotheca Regia*, a collection of some of the king's (Charles the first's) works, in which *Remains of the king*, the Declaration was published, 1649. And that it was *his own*, not another's confirmed by him, was the judgement of Dr. Pearson; who was about sixteen years old in 1628. In his answer to Dr. Burgess's Word by way of postscript, preserved in the *Bibliotheca scriptorum ecclesiae Anglicanae*, published 1709, p. 379. 'As for your expression,' says he, 'of the Declaration FATHERED on the late king. . . . I believe you cannot prove but that Declaration was his own, as much as any other declaration was his, or any king's.' And he implies, it was not only asserted but framed and penned by himself: and affirms, that the Declaration was not printed so early

ly as 1624, which was the last year of K. James.
 ' I beseech you therefore,' says he, (p. 380.)
 ' acknowledge the Declaration to be the King's,
 ' as Mr. Burton did; and say not that it was *fa-*
 ' *thered* upon that blessed martyr, which Mr.
 ' Burton himself would not endure.' He vindi-
 cates it; you see, as King Charles's own, with
 respect to the *framing*, as well as *setting it forth*.
 This gentleman then proceeds to writers of a
 later date, who ascribe it to Charles the first,
 as Collier, Bingham, Kennet, Puller, Neale,
 Anthony Collins, and Sparrow. But the general
 assent, and King Charles's calling it our Declara-
 tion, and there being no copy of it ever mention-
 ed before 1628, would be sufficient to ascertain it,
 if no occasion of doubt appeared on the other side.
 You indeed say, it is *more generally believed to*
have been first published by King James the first.^a But
 to prove this *more general belief*, you mention only
 Dr. Nicholls, who, in one column, calls it James
 the first's, though even he, in the second column
 of the same page, calls it Charles the first's. You
 confirm yourself in your opinion, from observing,
 that, in the Declaration, which Dr. Nicholls as-
 cribes to Charles, mention is made of the bishop
 of Chester's judgement, which appears not in the
 present Declaration: whence you would infer that
 the present Declaration is not king Charles's. It is
 strange, that no copy of the present Declaration,
 if it was King James's, should be found or heard
 of in his reign: and that if King Charles put one
 forth, containing the bishop of Chester's judge-
 ment, no such copy should have ever been seen from
 that time to this. The gentleman before-mentioned
 concurs in opinion with me, that the mistake is owing
 to the editor's inaccurate publication of Dr. Ni-
 cholls's

^a Confess. p. 125.

cholls's unfinished MS. The doctor draws a conclusion from a fact mentioned in the Declaration :
 ' If even in those curious points, in which the present differences lie, men of all sorts take the articles of the church of England to be for them' — The fact, taken from the words of the Declaration, is properly printed in Italicks: then follows the doctor's conclusion from it, which, in correspondence to the ' If' that begins the sentence, should have been expressed in Roman characters — ' then may be inferred, what the right reverend bishop of Chester hath said.' The conclusion is subjoined in the bishop's own words, ' this rather gives a testimony,' &c. And this is proved to be the case, from discovering who the bishop of Chester was, whose words are here quoted. This was no other than the fore-mentioned Dr. Pearson; in whose *No necessity of reformation*, &c. at page 343 of the *Biblioth. Script. Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, occurs this sentence : ' And so the exception no way infers the doubtfulness of the doctrine, but rather gives a testimony of the great wisdom and moderation of the church, which, in points doubtful and controverted, hath propounded only that which, with no sober man, can be matter of doubt, or subject of controversy.' Which are the very words quoted by Dr. Nicholls, and which could never have been quoted in any Declaration of King Charles the first, being not published before the year 1660.

Thus the only authority you urge is shewn clearly to be a mistake : but you say it is more generally believed to be King James's. One would think you had many to produce ; this gentleman hath acquainted me with two, and I know of no more : if you are not aware that there are two on your side, for you do not mention them, I will as ingenuously

genuously refer you to them, as he hath referred me. They are Bp. Gibson and Dr. Burn. These indeed the learned correspondent takes for one only, as he supposes the latter to copy from the former.

The bishop says, (Codex, p. 325. Vol. I. Edit. 1761. note) 'This body of articles . . . was 'not only passed in convocation, and confirmed 'by royal authority, in the year 1562, but was 'also ratified anew, first by Queen Elizabeth, and 'afterwards by King James the first.' He then gives us Queen Elizabeth's confirmation, and afterwards King James's; which he makes to be the Declaration now standing before the articles. But my learned informer adds, 'The good bishop 'is undoubtedly mistaken.' For, though he allows the assertion, that King James the first ratified the articles as well as Queen Elizabeth, yet he disallows his proof with respect to the Declaration, and says, it was by ratifying the Canons made in 1603. For his authority, he produces Lord Coke; who, (Part 4th of his Institutes, Edit. 1648, p. 323.) says to this purpose, subscription was required by the clergy, both *by act of parliament* confirming and establishing the XXXIX Articles of religion agreed upon at a convocation, and ratified by Queen Elizabeth under the great seal of England: and *by Canons* of the church of England made and ratified by King James.—The marginal note referred to at the word, *Canons*, informs us, they were made *at a convocation begun at London, Anno Domini 1603, 1. James.* And then follow the three articles in the 36th Canon.

This, I think, must determine the question, beyond farther dispute, whose the Declaration was? as the earliest copy yet discoverable is that of 1628. At least no one hath any authority to call it King James's,

James's, till he can produce, or direct us to a copy of it put forth in the reign of that King.

Give me leave to add, that the just quoted words of Lord Coke shew his opinion to have been, that the whole XXXIX Articles were established by the act of parliament of Queen Elizabeth. He was born in 1550, and so was 21 years of age when the act passed, and was conversant in law matters from his earliest days.

I have likewise acknowledgements to make of other informations, conveyed in not quite so civil a manner, by *Occasional Remarks* lately published: the production, if I may presume to guess, not of any of your *Auxiliaries*, however numerous, but of your own pen, who can multiply yourself into an army, by assuming various forms, to make your attacks more terrible. Alas, what is to become of me, fated singly to sustain so alarming a confederacy, while there advance against me

Magnum
Agmen agens Clausus, Magnique ipse agminis instar.

Indeed the courtesy of the remarker, whoever he is, gives me a Dwarf, as *inlisted under my standard, partly to bear a part of my light armour.*^b But that Dwarf, as he calls him, had erected a standard of his own before he knew any thing of mine: a standard which the *Oc. Remarker* will not be easily able to take. I return that gentleman thanks for the pleasure, which his ingenious performance gave me; *ridentem dicere verum Quid vetat?* Yet, to shew the vanity of my adversary's conjecture, who, extremely like yourself, takes the liberty of supposing what he pleases, without any proof, or just grounds of suspicion, truth obliges me to deny

^b Oc. Rem. p. 18.

deny any confederacy with him, or even knowledge, or so much as guess who he is. You, however, and your friends, may do well to recollect, that the same genius to which we ascribe the *Batrachomyomachia*, could when he pleased write an *Iliad*.

As for myself, I am introduced as a *stalking Terræ filius, exhibiting my defiance*.^c Let this pass for an ornament amongst others akin to it. But possibly the reader may wonder at the culling such a flower, by the equally nameless, and much more censorious, Confessionalist and his new ally.

Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?

The Remarker charges me with representing *the concessions and alterations in King Charles the second's Declaration concerning ecclesiastical affairs*,^a imperfectly. I was not concerned to state all the concessions and alterations in that Declaration, but to shew, that *the complication of sophistry, hypocrisy, and virulence, which you charge on the part of the orthodox, relating to the Savoy conference, hardly to be paralleled in popish history*,^b did indeed rather belong to the presbyterian commissioners. In order to shew this, I reduced the several particulars in debate to three general points: church government; the English liturgy; rites, ceremonies, and ecclesiastical habits: in which points the King had made concessions, 25th of October 1660. Had the King made ever so many more concessions, not noticed by the commissioners; or had he subdivided these into ever so many particulars, reducible to one or other of these generals; I was not obliged minutely to consider every one of those subdivisions. It was sufficient for me to shew, that, in the three

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^a Ibid.

^b Ibid.

^c Confess. Pref. p. xxix.

chief points contended by the King, to one or other of which every thing objected to by the petitioners, or debated in the conference, was reducible, the presbyterian commissioners were most guilty of those crimes which you charge on the orthodox. I did not mean to load one side, and acquit the other intirely. I expressed my wish, that more had been granted by the church-commissioners. And indeed it is to be lamented by all ingenuous minds, that the spirit of peace did not breathe more powerfully on both sides. Such ingenuoufness you have no where discovered through your book : and in this instance I undertook to shew your very partial and unjust representation of the persons concerned in the disputes at that time : which having done sufficiently, I had no business *to go on.* But if the Remarker chuses to do it, I am not afraid to attend him. I have no apprehensions that *the bulwark of subscriptions should be removed,* by any thing mentioned in the King's declaration, or the subsequent conference. The Declaration does not REMOVE, but *FIX the bulwark of subscription,* as enjoined by parliament : though it excuses, for the interval, the subscription required by the Canon : and in the conference, the presbyterians object nothing to *subscribing the articles* ; but to the enjoined use of rites, ceremonies, and habits, prescribed by the liturgy, and to the having them more bound upon them by *subscription, according to the 36th Canon.* And if some of them understood the King to mean that he would dispense with the laws, it was not the bishops only, but the judges, during the interval, and the parliament afterwards, who disapproved of it.^a

So

^f Oc. Rem. p. 18.^g Ibid.^a Collier's Eccles. Hist. Vol. II. p. 876.

So that assent to the XXXIX Articles, by virtue of the 13. Eliz. c. 12. was still insisted upon, and the next parliament plainly understood that statute as requiring subscription to them all: as hath been observed by Dr. Rutherford; and is further evident from the 17th and 19th sections; in which, heads of Colleges and Halls, and Lecturers, are bound to subscribe *the XXXIX articles*. Would not incumbents of parishes in general have been bound at the same time to subscribe them all, if it had not been understood by the legislature, that they were *before* obliged to subscribe them all?

But, even supposing you had proved a *limitation* intended, which you have not done, nor will ever be able to do; still the Remarker's defence of you had been a very false one: who *insists upon it, that those gentlemen who have accused the author of the Confessional of attempting to subvert the church of England à fundamentis, ONLY for proposing to have the canonical subscription to the XXXIX Articles taken away, are widely mistaken.*¹ For you do not propose to have *ONLY* canonical subscription taken away, but *all* subscription. You expressly declare, that your *disquisition was intended to prevail on our present governours to remove the yoke of ESTABLISHED CONFESSIONS AS TESTS OF ORTHODOXY.*^{*} Is this taking away *ONLY* canonical subscription? When you complain of *establishing these explications as tests of orthodoxy, as a great misfortune, by requiring ministers to subscribe them, as an indispensable condition of admitting them to the pastoral office,*¹ is not this levelled against *parliamentary* subscription, as well as canonical? when you censure our *establish-*

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¹ O. R. p. 17.^{*} Confess. p. 16.¹ Confess. p. 17.

ed confessions of faith as unchristian impositions;^m and assert, that *all subscription to articles of faith and religious doctrines, conceived in unscriptural terms, and enforced by publick authority, are utterly unwarrantable;*ⁿ is this ONLY a proposal to take away subscription to *rituals*; is it not equally against a subscription to *doctrines*? And when the church of England hath laid, as *her foundations*, the scriptures and the three creeds,^o is not your endeavour to render those scriptures *uncertain*, by permitting them to be wrested at will; and representing those creeds as unwarrantable impositions, nay as *absurd*, and *nonsense*, a manifest and avowed attempt to subvert the church of England *à fundamentis*? If then you have given the Remarker authority to make this defence for you, here is a *specimen*, not only of *artifice*, but of something much worse: and I do, in *sober sadness*, and with as much *solemnity* as you please, reprove you both for your *disingenuity*.^p

I am next charged with inconsistency, as *wanting to be reconciled to myself*. How so? Why, *he deals chiefly in bye-matters, and these he treats in a bye-way of his own*.^q Now if this be intended as a proof of inconsistency, I acknowledge my inability to understand it. If it be a *new charge*, I leave my vindication to yourself, who are most concerned in it: for it was my commerce with you that led me to deal in these bye-matters; and whither should I follow my adversary but into those bye-ways, in which only he is to be found? The bye-way is not *my own*, but *your own*. But he cannot be certain *whither I am bound, or by what church-system I will abide*: If the Remarker hath not sagacity enough to find out this by my letters,

^m Confess. p. 25.ⁿ P. 26.^o Art. VI. VII. VIII^p O. R. p. 20.^q O. R. p. 50.

letters, to save him further trouble in this inquiry, I will acquaint him, that I abide by the system of the church of England, as now improved by a free toleration. But perhaps what was intended for the proof of my inconsistency follows: *Sometimes he reproves the author of the Confessional, with magisterial severity, as too much a friend to the dissenters, ONLY for exposing the iniquity of their ancient persecutors. On other occasions he seems disposed to coax the dissenters in a way that puts one in mind of, If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, &c.* Where is the inconsistency of my reproving you for your partiality and unjust aggravations of what their adversaries did at that time, in obedience to the laws, without mentioning any of the illegal and iniquitous provocations then given on the other side, with my sincere approbation of the present legal indulgence granted to dissenters? and let me ask further, whether his representing the last as an hypocritical disposition *to coax the dissenters*, be an exercise of that charity, which your friend the reviewer recommends? and whether that friend ever saw fewer instances of such charity, or more breaches of it, in any writer, than in the author of the Confessional?

In the remainder of this, and in the following page, the Remarker attempts to overpower me by a continual firing of questions at me.

Who——would contend with a man, who, at this time of the day, shews an inclination to support the narrow-hearted, and more than semipagan, notion, of religion, entertained by the convocation-men in 1689?

Why may not I, at any time of the day, support even convocation-men, as far as they can with truth be supported, against the extravagant imputations of the author of the Confessional? and

what proof hath the Remarker to give, that I have done more?

In what way can you deal, or upon what common principles can you argue, with a pretended defender of a Protestant church, who either is, or pretends to be, ignorant of the master-argument against popery? How can the Remarker accuse me of this, when I have not said a word of the real master-argument, only of what you called so, but did not specify what it was; which yet I guessed to be something against the constitution of our own church, and believe I have not guessed wrong.

Is it worth while to hold debate with a man, who quarrels with you for calling the nonconformists of Abp. Parker's time by the name of puritans, after so good an authority as Strype? Might I not, without quarrelling with you, ask, whether you meant to include the Presbyterians among the puritans in Abp. Parker's time; or observe to you, that there was a difference between them at that time; for that the Presbyterians communicated with the church of England, which the puritans refused to do; and that the Presbyterians condemned the puritans for their separation? Where shall we find peaceable conference, if this be quarelling?

Or with a man, who while he is correcting your historical errors, speaks of two bishops, one of whom died while the other was a school-boy, as one and the same man? Here, sir, I stand reprov'd; and return thanks for the information, though conveyed in no gentler terms than those of the Remarker. But is it all lost time and pains to hold debate, on important points, with a man who can be guilty of such mistakes? And can this be objected with any decency by a vindicator of the Confessional against the Letter-writer? You had

had called Barlow's Account of the Hampton-court conference a farce. I knew the relator to have been a bishop: afterwards, at p. 175, you mention *the learned Bp. Barlow*, and call him *this worthy bishop*: recollecting you had done so, and having never seen the book you quote, I hastily supposed you meant the same man; and fell into a mistake, which a little attention might have prevented. I had no other purpose in it, than an endeavour to discover the meaning of an ambiguous sentence; and presumed, from the above circumstance, that you meant not to represent *Barlow's Account*, but the *conference* itself as a farce. Here was certainly no blameable intention, no wilful mistake made to serve a purpose. And is this so unexampled a fault as to render the writer capable of committing it inexcusable, and unworthy to be debated with? Is the author of the Confessional, whose time is too precious to be laid out on such incorrect writers, himself incapable of committing a mistake through inattention? Did he not confound, in his first edition, Mr. Gay with Mr. Law, because *the book was not then at hand*: and will not my not having the *Genuine Remains* at hand, be as good an excuse for me? Does not one of your advocates, the monthly Reviewer, say, 'It is but justice to acknowledge, that he [the Letter-writer] has pointed out some few mistakes and misrepresentations, which the author of the Confessional is chargeable with, for want of attention or proper information; and which we doubt not but he will have candor enough to acknowledge.' And will not my candor in acknowledging a mistake, from want of attention, when pointed out to me, equally absolve me? Does not even the Oc. Remarker himself acknowledge you guilty of a *palpable mistake*, which the *Doubter* had pointed out: which yet he

thinks sufficiently atoned for, by venturing to say for you, that had you been apprized of your error, you would readily have acknowledged it, and corrected in the second edition? And will not my as ready acknowledgement of a mistake, as soon as apprized of it, be as meritorious in me? Why then am I so unmercifully treated by the same Remarker for *one* slip, through want of attention, and which carried in it no *incautious imputation* on any man? Doubtless many more may, and have, escaped me; and many more might have been pointed out in the Confessional: but where no unfair design appeared in the mistake, I deemed it unfair to attempt prejudicing the reader against a writer merely for mistakes of inattention. With what face then can the Remarker raise such an outcry against the Letter-writer, and represent him as unworthy to be debated with by an author, whom he permits us to call, in some instances, a *fallible*, and, if you will, a *careless*, in others a *confident* writer.

The Remarker's last question is, Is it worth your while to hold debate *with a disputant, who, while he is questioning you with an ingenuous magnanimity, concerning the sincerity of your own subscription, seems not to have any feelings that ever he subscribed himself?* And why should this be suspected, unless he is uncharitable enough to believe, that no man hath any other feelings of having subscribed than those of remorse? Which, although he and you may have, I thank God I have not.

In the same page he charges me with setting myself up as *advocate-general for the clergy of the church of England; and thinks it incredible, that such a respectable body, among whom he trusts are* very

very many learned, rational, pious, liberal-minded, divines, would abuse such a one for their representative. I intirely acquit my reverend brethren of deserving any reproach for making choice of such a one as myself for their advocate, by acknowledging that they did not meet from all parts of the kingdom to chuse me for their representative. Nor do I suppose, though I acknowledge your merit well-deserving such preference, that ever the sectaries and hereticks all over England met together to chuse you *their* representative. This is neither usual nor practicable, on either side. What a very trifler then have I to deal with, that makes the want of such a delegation an objection against me? When a bold invader appears, the *common danger* is commission sufficient to justify every citizen in endeavouring to repel the foe:

*Hostilis cum machina terruit urbem,
Undique concurrunt arcem defendere cives.*

Claud.

And, as the Remarker suggests in his title-page, the *common resentment* furnishes them with weapons for the encounter; if not the properest that might have been chosen, yet, with such as will testify their zeal, and perhaps repel the enemy till more powerful succours arrive. It is indeed an excellent project for the demolition of Christianity, as taught in the church of England, if every enemy of it, on the principles of liberty, might attack it at pleasure, yet none of its friends should be permitted to defend it, till all the clergy of that church should be gathered together to agree in the choice of an advocate-general. However, sir, I have a commission for what I do, from St. Paul and St. Jude; *to strive together for the faith of the gospel;*

Joseph and *correctly* to contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. Nay, I have an authority which you will certainly think, though not equal to the apostles, yet far superior to my poor pretensions of understanding them. I mean your own; a commission to me signed with your own hand. For in your first edition you permitted me, according to my promise at ordination, to 'be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word.' And in your second you more expressly confirm it, by saying, 'If by *banishing* and *driving away*, no more is meant than opposing to them argument, exhortation, or instruction, *undoubtedly*, every man safely may promise, and every clergyman ought to perform in this way as much as he is able.'

In answer to the civility of the advertisement at the end, I shall only say, that whatever the Remarker or I may think of ourselves or of each other, the world will judge to which the epithet of *brain-sick* is most applicable. And that *anxiety for the preservation of ecclesiastical peace*, is no more a mark of insanity in scripture, than the characters, *presumptuous are they, self-willed, not afraid to speak evil of dignities*, are a description of a sound understanding. If any person, thinking I want a cure, will undertake it with a truly charitable hand, I will thankfully give his medicines a very fair trial: but such treatment of me as the Remarker's is, can serve only to remind me of Job's remonstrance to his friends, *How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?* I perfectly concur in those sentiments

^a Phil. i. 27.

^w Jude, verse 3.

^x Confess. p. 382, note.

^y O. R. p. 57.

^z Ibid.

^a 2 Pet. xi. 10.

^b Job. vi. 25.

ments of an eminent divine, with which the Remarker concludes. And among other things I agree with him in this, that 'When the enemies
' to reason and to religion perceive, that a man
' will not have the courage to defend his opinions — they never fail to take advantage of
' him, to oppress him, and to run him down,
' well knowing that nothing is necessary to accomplish their purposes beside stubbornness, clamor, impudence, and violence.* Yet I should not have opposed your scheme so earnestly, if I had not seen cause to think, that beside the extreme danger of your introducing by it, perhaps undesignedly, discord and confusion, you directly intended it for the means of spreading pernicious errors: my sincerest wish being, that *mercy and truth may meet together ; righteousness and peace may kiss each other.**

* P. 58.

* Pf. lxxxv. 10.

F I N I S



Errors of the Press, which affect the Sense, are thus desired to be corrected; other inaccuracies, especially in the pointing, are left to the Reader's Candor.

- P. 11. L. 6. from the bottom, for *sketches* read *stretches*.
19.—18. for *Calvinists* r. *Arminians*.
21.— 9. before *safety* insert *equal*.
22.— 3. after *but* insert *make use of one*.
23.—23. after *most* insert *men*.
35.— 6. for *vigorous* r. *rigorous*.
50.— 6. for (*by 13. Eliz.*) r. (*that of the Convocation at least*).
57.—28. for *church* r. *puritans*.
61.—22. for *inserting* r. *insert*.
63.— penult. for *App.* r. *Abp.*
77.— 1. for *think* r. *think*.
— 9. for *was it* r. *were they*.
79.—18. *contowerted* r. *controverted*.
80.— 4. from the bottom, for *rested* r. *wrested*.
88.— 4. for *App.* r. *Abp.*
96.—16. for ? put !.
128.—18. after or insert *so*.
131.— 6. from the bottom, for *representaive* r. *representative*.
132.—10. for *individuual*, r. *individual*.
136.—21. for *not be* r. *keep us from being*.
146.—23. *delethar*.
150.— 7. for *disturbad* r. *disturbed*.
172.—23. for *Dr. Burges's word* r. *Dr. Burges*.